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THE WHOLE

WORKS

OF THE REVEREND

MR. JOHN FLAVEL,

Late MINISTER of the GOSPEL at *Dartmouth* in *Devon*.

IN EIGHT VOLUMES.

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Of Chriſt's Offices.

Queſt. 23. WHAT offices doth Chriſt execute as our Redeemer?

A. *Chriſt, as our Redeemer, doth execute the office of a prophet, of a prieſt, and of a king, both in his eſtate of humiliation and exaltation.*

Q. 1. What are the ſtates and conditions of our Redeemer?

A. Chriſt's ſtates are twofold; namely, his ſtate of humiliation, and his ſtate of exaltation; Phil. ii. 8, 9. And being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs: Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name.

Q. 2. How many offices belong to Chriſt in theſe ſtates?

A. Chriſt hath a threefold office; namely, of a prophet, of a prieſt, and of a king.

Q. 3. Why doth Chriſt take all theſe three offices?

A. Becauſe they are all neceſſary for our ſalvation, and we have the benefit of them all; 1 Cor. i. 30. Who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.

Q. 4. Can no man take Chriſt in one office, and not in another?

A. No; whoever will have the benefit of any one, muſt receive him in all; Acts v. 31. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince, and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins.

Q. 5. What reſpect have the offices of Chriſt to the promiſes?

A. The promiſes flow out of them as out of their fountain

2 Cor. i. 20. For all the promiſes of God in him, are yea, and in him, amen.

Q. 6. What promiſes flow out of the prophetical office?

A. All promiſes of illumination, guidance, and direction, flow out of Chriſt's prophetical office?

Q. 7. What promiſes flow out of the prieſtly office?

A. All the promiſes of pardon and peace flow out of it.

Q. 8. What promiſes flow out of the kingly office?

A. All the promiſes of defence, protection, and deliverances.

Q. 9. What is the firſt inſtruction?

A. Hence we learn the completeneſs of Chriſt for all the wants of his people; Col. ii. 10. And ye are complete in him.

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inſtruction?

A. Hence we learn the folly and miſery of all thoſe hypocrites that cloſe partially with Chriſt.

Q. 11. What is the third inſtruction?

A. Hence we learn the ſingular dignity of the Lord Jeſus: None ever having had all thoſe offices but Chriſt.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inſtruction?

A. That faith is a conſiderate act; and requires much deliberation.

Of Chriſt's Prophetical Office.

Queſt. 24. HOW doth Chriſt execute the office of a prophet?

A. *Chriſt executeth the office of a prophet, in revealing to us by his word and Spirit, the will of God for our ſalvation.*

Q. 1. What doth Chriſt's prophetical office imply?

A. It implies man's natural blindneſs and ignorance; 1 Cor. ii. 14. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.

Q. 2. What elſe doth it imply?

A. That Chriſt is the original and fountain of all that light which guides us to ſalvation; 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7. For God that commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. 3. How doth Chriſt teach men the will of God?

A. He doth it by external revelation of it; Acts iii. 22. For Moſes truly ſaid to the fathers, A prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him ſhall ye hear in all things, whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto you. And by internal illumination; Luke xxiv. 45. Then

opened he their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the ſcripture.

Q. What need then of man's miniſtry?

A. Very much; for Chriſt hath inſtituted miniſters as inſtruments, by whom he will teach us; Eph. iv. 11, 12. And he gave ſome apoſtles, and ſome prophets, and ſome evangeliſts, and ſome paſtors, and teachers, for the perfecting of the ſaints, for the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt. Acts xxvi. 18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins.

Q. 5. Can no man ſavingly know the will of God without the teachings of Chriſt?

A. No; though common knowledge may be obtained in a natural way, yet not ſaving; Matth. xi. 25. At that time Jeſus anſwered, and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt reveaied them unto babes.

Q. 6. How appears it that Chriſt is appointed to this office?

A. We have the written word for it; Acts iii. 22. For Moſes truly ſaid unto the fathers, A prophet ſhall the Lord your God raiſe up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him ſhall ye hear in all things, whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto you.

Q. 7. What is the firſt inſtruction from hence?

A. None need be diſcouraged at their natural weakneſs, if Chriſt be their teacher; Matth. xi. 25. At that time Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes. Pſalm xix. 7. The teſtimonies of the Lord are ſure, making wiſe the ſimple.

Q. 8. What is the ſecond inſtruction?

A. That it is a dreadful judgment to be ſpiritually blinded under the goſpel; 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.

Q. 9. What is the third inſtruction?

A. That prayer is the beſt expedient to obtain ſaving knowledge; James i. 5. If any of you lack wiſdom, let him aſk of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it ſhall be given him.

Q. 10. What is the laſt inſtruction?

A. Learn hence the tranſcendent excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt above all other knowledge; Phil. iii. 8. Yea, doubtleſs, I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord.

Of Chriſt's Prieſthood.

Queſt 25. HOW doth Chriſt execute the office of a prieſt?

A. *Chriſt executeth the office of a prieſt, in his once offering up of himſelf a ſacrifice to ſatisfy divine juſtice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual interceſſion for us.*

Q. 1. What is the prieſthood of Chriſt in general?

A. It is his expiation of our ſins by the ſacrifice of himſelf, and obtaining God's favour for us; Col. i. 20. And (having made peace through the blood of his croſs) by him to reconcile all things unto himſelf; by him, I ſay, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

Q. 2. What are the parts of Chriſt's prieſtly office?

A It hath two parts. *Firſt*, Oblation, or offering of himſelf; Heb. ix. 14. How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your conſciences from dead works, to ſerve the living God? *Secondly*, Interceſſion for us; Heb. vii. 25. Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.

Q. 3. What is the end of Chriſt's oblation?

A. The end of it, as to God, was to ſatisfy his incenſed juſtice; Rom. iii. 25. Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God. And as to men, to put away their ſins; Heb. ix. 26. For then muſt he often have ſuffered ſince the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf.

Q. 4. What is the firſt difference between Chriſt and other prieſts?

A. Other prieſts offered the blood of beaſts; Chriſt his own blood; Heb. ix. 12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Q. 5. What is the ſecond difference?

A. They offered many ſacrifices; Chriſt perfected all by one

offering, Heb. x. 14. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.

Q. 6. What was the ſacrifice Chriſt offered to God?

A. His body; Heb. x. 10. By the which will we are ſanctified, through the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all. And his ſoul; Iſa. liii. 10. When thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin.

Q. 7. Whence is the efficacy of this ſacrifice?

A. From the divine Perſon to whom that ſoul and body was united; Acts xv. 28. Feed the church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood.

Q. 8. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That believers are diſcharged by Chriſt from all their ſins and debts; Acts xiii. 39. And by him, all that believe are juſtified from all things.

Q. 9. What is the ſecond inference?

A. That it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an abſolute God; Luke xxiii. 31. For if they do theſe things in a green tree, what ſhall be done in the dry?

Q. 10. What is the third inference?

A. That it is impoſſible for man to ſatisfy God for his own ſins; Pſal. cxxx. 3. If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquities, O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?

Q. 11. What is the laſt inference?

A. That the Chriſtian religion only ſettles the conſcience in peace; Heb. ix. 14. How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your conſciences from dead works to ſerve the living God?

Of Chriſt's Kingly Office.

Queſt. 26. HOW doth Chriſt execute the office of a king?

A. *Chriſt executeth the office of a king, in ſubduing us to himſelf, in ruling and defending us, and in reſtraining and conquering all his and our enemies.*

Q. 1. How manifold is Chriſt's kingdom?

A. Twofold. *Firſt*, Internal, in mens ſouls; Luke xvii. 21. Behold, the kingdom of God is within you. *Secondly*, External, over all the world; Eph. i. 22. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the church.

Q. 2. What is the end of Chriſt's providential kingdom?

A. The good and ſalvation of the church; John xvii. 2. As

thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life to as many as thou haſt given him.

Q. 3. Wherein doth he exerciſe his kingly power?

A. In reſtraining his, and his people's enemies; Pſalm lxxvi. 10. Surely the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee; the remainder of wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain.

Q. 4. How elſe is it exerciſed?

A. In protecting his church amidſt all enemies; Exod. iii. 3. And Moſes ſaid, I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt.

Q. 5. What inſtruments doth Chriſt uſe?

A. Angels are miniſtring ſpirits to him; Heb. i. 14. Are they not all miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation? And men, yea the worſt of men; Rev. xii. 16. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and ſwallowed up the flood which the dragon caſt out of his mouth.

Q. 6. In what manner doth Chriſt rule the world?

A. By ſupreme power; Rev. xix. 16. He hath on his veſture, and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. And perfect wiſdom; Eph. i. 11. In whom alſo we have obtained an inheritance, being predeſtinated according to the purpoſe of him who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will.

Q. 7. What learn we from hence?

A. That the Church is ſaved amidſt all dangers; Jer. xxx. 11. For I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to ſave thee; though I make a full end of all nations, whither I have ſcattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee.

Q. 8. What is the ſecond inſtruction?

A. That the godly may ſafely truſt to Chriſt's care; 2 Chron. xvi. 9. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of them whoſe heart is perfect towards him.

Q. 9. What is the third inſtruction?

A. That all plots againſt the church ſhall ſurely be defeated; Iſa. liv. 17. No weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper.

Q. 10. What is the fourth inſtruction?

A. It gives the ſaints full ſatisfaction in all conditions; Rom. viii. 28. And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.

Q. 11. What is the laſt inference?

A. We ſhould not ſtand in a ſlaviſh fear of men; Iſa. li.

12. I, even I am he that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man, which shall be made as grass.

Of Christ's Humiliation.

Quest. 27. WHerein did Christ's humiliation consist?

A. *Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, unergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.*

Q. 1. What doth Christ's humbling of himself import?

A. His voluntariness in the deepest point of self-denial; Psal. xl. 7. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me.

Q. 2. What was the first act of Christ's humiliation?

A. His taking man's nature on him, with all its sinless infirmities; Rom. viii. 3. God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.

Q. 3. What is the second part of his humiliation?

A. That mean, life he lived in this world, which obscured his divine glory; Mark vi. 3. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?

Q. 4. What was the first thing in Christ's life that humbled him?

A. The poverty of it; Mat. vii. 20. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Q. 5. What was the second thing in his life that humbled him?

A. The temptations of Satan, to which he was subject; Mat, iv. 1. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil, and that for our sakes. Heb. ii. 17. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren. ver. 18. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Q. 6. What was the third thing in Christ life that humbled him?

A. His subjection to the law; Gal. i. 4. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.

Q. 7. What was the fourth thing in Christ's life that humbled him?

A. The revilings and contradictions of sinners; Heb. xii.

3. For conſider him that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf.

Q. 8. Wherein was Chriſt humbled in his death?

A. His death was painful and ignominious; Gal. iii. 13. Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us: For it is written, curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree. Made a curſe for us, and deſerted in it; Matth. xxvii. 46. And about the ninth hour, Jeſus cried with a loud voice, ſaying, Eli, Eli, lama ſabacthani; that is to ſay, My God, My God, why haſt thou forſaken me?

Q. 9. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That lowlineſs and humility becomes Chriſt's followers; Matth. xi. 29. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inference?

A. That Chriſt's love to ſinners is aſtoniſhingly great; 2 Cor. viii. 9. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for our ſakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich.

Q. 11. What is the third inference?

A. Chriſtians ſhould be ready to ſuffer for Chriſt; 1 Peter iv. 1. Foraſmuch as Chriſt hath ſuffered for us in the fleſh, arm yourſelves likewiſe with the ſame mind: for he that hath ſuffered in the fleſh, hath ceaſed from ſin.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference?

A. That humiliation is the true way to exaltation; Matth. xxiii. 12. And whoſoever ſhall exalt himſelf, ſhall be abaſed; and he that ſhall humble himſelf, ſhall be exalted.

Of Chriſt's exaltation.

Queſt. 28. WHEREIN conſiſts Chriſt's exaltation?

A. *Chriſt's exaltation conſiſts in his riſing again from the dead on the third day; in aſcending up into heaven, in ſitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in coming to judge the world at the laſt day.*

Q. 1. What is the firſt ſtep of Chriſt's exaltation?

A. His reſurrection from the dead.

Q. 2. How doth his reſurrection appear?

A. By the ſcripture prophecies accompliſhed in him; 1 Cor. xv. 4. And that he was buried, and that he roſe again the third day, according to the ſcriptures.

Q. 3. Why did Chriſt riſe again?

A. To eſtabliſh our faith, and aboliſh our ſins; 1 Cor. xv. 17. And if Chriſt be not riſen, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your ſins.

Q. 4. What other end was there of Chriſt's reſurrection?

A. To declare his divine power; Rom. i. 4. And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holineſs, by the reſurrection from the dead. And to evidence the fulneſs of his ſatisfaction; John xvi. 10. Of righteouſneſs, becauſe I go to my Father, and ye ſee me no more.

Q. 5. Did Chriſt riſe in the ſame body he laid down?

A. It was ſubſtantially the ſame; John xx. 27. Then ſaith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thruſt it into my ſide, and be not faithleſs, but believing.

Q. 6. What doth Chriſt's reſurrection teach us?

A. The certainty of our reſurrection after death; 1 Cor. xv. 20. But now is Chriſt riſen from the dead, and become the firſt fruits of them that ſlept.

Q. 7. What was the ſecond ſtep of Chriſt's exaltation?

A. His aſcenſion after forty days into heaven; Acts i. 2, 3. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the holy Ghoſt, had given commandment unto the apoſtles, whom he had choſen: To whom alſo he ſhewed himſelf alive after his paſſion, by many infallible proofs, being ſeen of them forty days, and ſpeaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Q. 8. Why did Chriſt ſtay ſo long on earth?

A. To aſſure the truth of his reſurrection, and to ſettle the due government of his church, Acts i. 2, 3.

Q. 9. For what end did he aſcend?

A. To take poſſeſſion of his glory; John xvii. 5. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. And that as our fore-runner, Heb. vi. 20. Whither the Fore-runner is for us entered, even Jeſus, *&c.*

Q. 10. In what manner did Chriſt aſcend?

A. Triumphantly, and magnificently; Pſalm xlvii. 5. God is gone up with a ſhout, the Lord with the ſound of a trumpet.

Q. 11. What doth his aſcenſion teach us?

A. Heavenly-mindedneſs; Col. iii. 1, 2. If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God; ſet your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. And an encouragement in our Chriſtian race; Heb. xii. 1, 2. Wherefore, ſeeing we alſo are compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo ea-

ſily beſet us, and let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith; who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The ſecond Part of the 28th Queſtion, of Chriſt's Exaltation.

Queſt. 1. WHAT was the third degree of Chriſt's exaltation?

A. His ſitting at God's right hand in heaven; Heb. i. 3. When he had by himſelf purged our ſins, ſat down on the right hand of the majeſty on high.

Q. 2. What doth God's right hand ſignify?

A. A ſtate of honour; Heb. i. 13. But to which of the angels ſaid he at any time, Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footſtool? And power; Matth. xxvi. 64. Hereafter ſhall ye ſee the Son of man ſitting on the right hand of power.

Q. 3. What is implied in Chriſt's ſitting there?

A. That his work on earth is finiſhed; Heb. x. 12. But this man after he had offered one ſacrifice for ſin, for ever ſat down on the right hand of God.

Q. 4. What elſe doth it ſignify?

A. Chriſt's power over all enemies; Pſalm cx. 2. The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy ſtrength out of Zion: Rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies.

Q. 5. What learn we from Chriſt's ſitting there?

A. The high honour believers are advanced to by Chriſt; Eph. ii. 6. And hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.

Q. 6. What is the laſt ſtep of Chriſt's exaltation?

A. His coming to judgment; Acts x. 42. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to teſtify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Q. 7. Is it certain there ſhall be a judgment-day?

A. Yes; the ſcripture aſſures it; 2 Cor. v. 10. For we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. And every man's conſcience witneſſeth to it; Rom. ii. 16. In the day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my goſpel.

Q. 8. What is the firſt property of Chriſt's judgment?

A. It will be awful and ſolemn; 1 Theſ. iv. 16. For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt.

Q. 9. What is the ſecond property of it?

A. It will be exact and critical; Rom. ii. 16. In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel. Matth. xii. 36. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

Q. 10. What is the third property of it?

A. It will be an universal judgment; Rev. xx. 12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened.

Q. 11. How is this a part of Christ's exaltation?

A. He now acts in the fulness of his kingly power; Matth. xxv. 34. Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. And this will roll away the reproach of his enemies; Rev. i. 7. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.

Q. 12. What learn we from Christ's being judge?

A. That believers shall not be cast in judgment; Rom. viii. 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

Q. 13. What learn we from hence?

A. The deplorable state of Christless persons; Luke xix. 27. But those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

Q. 14. What else learn we from Christ's judgment?

A. To give all diligence to be found of him in peace; 2 Pet. iii. 14. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace.

Of the Application of Christ.

Quest. 29. HOW are we made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ?

A. *We are made partakers of the redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual application of it to us by his holy Spirit.*

Q. 1. What did our redemption cost Christ?

A. It cost him his own blood to obtain it; Heb. ix. 12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Q. 2. Can none have the benefit of it, except it be applied to them?

A. No, if Christ be not applied, we cannot be saved; John

i. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Q. 3. Whoſe work or office is it to apply Chriſt to us?

A. It is the office and work of God's Spirit; Titus iii. 4, 5. But after that the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared, not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghoſt.

Q. 4. What means doth the Spirit uſe in applying Chriſt?

A. The external means he makes uſe of, is the miniſtry of the goſpel; 1 Cor. iii. 5. Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but miniſters by whom ye believed?

Q. 5. Is this ſufficient of itſelf?

A. No, the bleſſing and power of the Spirit muſt accompany it, or Chriſt cannot be applied; 1 Theſſ. i. 5, 6. For our goſpel came not unto you in word only, but alſo in power, and in the holy Ghoſt, and in much aſſurance, as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your ſake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the holy Ghoſt.

Q. 6. To whom doth the Spirit apply Chriſt?

A. To thoſe that were given him of the Father before the world was; Acts xiii. 48. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. John xiv. 17. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you.

Q. 7. Is the application of Chriſt to a ſoul finiſhed at once?

A. Tho' the firſt act of faith unites the ſoul to Chriſt, yet it is a continued act; 1 Pet. ii. 4. To whom coming, as unto a living ſtone.

Q. 8. What learn you from hence?

A. What a deſtitute thing the ſoul is that is out of Chriſt; Rev. iii. 18. Becauſe thou ſayeſt I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing; and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

Q. 9. What elſe doth it teach us?

A. The riches and dignity of believers. Chriſt, and all his purchaſes are theirs; 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things preſent, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's.

Q. 10. What elſe doth it teach us?

A. The righteouſneſs of God in the deſtruction of all unbelievers; John v. 40. Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.

Of our Union with Chriſt.

Queſt. 30. HOW doth the Spirit apply to us the redemption purchaſed by Chriſt.

A. *By working faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Chriſt in our effectual calling.*

Q. 1. Can none have ſaving benefit by Chriſt, but ſuch as are united to him?

A. No, for as Adam's ſin could not hurt us, except we had been in him; ſo Chriſt's redemption cannot profit us, except we are in him; 1 Cor. i. 30. But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.

Q. 2. What are the bonds of this union?

A. The Spirit on God's part; 1 John iii. 24. And he that keepeth his commandments, dwelleth in him, and he in him; and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. And faith on our part; Eph. iii. 17. That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith.

Q. 3. What is the firſt property of this union?

A. It is an intimate union; Eph. v. 30. For we are members of his body, of his fleſh, and of his bones.

Q. 4. What is the ſecond property?

A. It is an union never to be diſſolved; Rom. viii. 35, 38. Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? For I am perſuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.

Q. 5. What is the third property of this union?

A. It makes Chriſt, and all that he hath purchaſed, become ours; 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. All are yours, and ye are Chriſt's; and Chriſt is God's.

Q. 6. What is the fourth property of this union?

A. It is the foundation and root of all our ſpiritual and acceptable obedience; John xv. 4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itſelf, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

Q. 7. What is the first inference from hence?

A. That saving grace in the saints is immortal, being secured to them in and by Christ; Col. iii. 3. Your life is hid with Christ in God.

Q. 8. What is the second inference?

A. That the relation between Christ and believers is very near and intimate; Eph. v. 30. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Q. 9. What is the third inference?

A. That believers need not be afraid to go down to the grave; Rom. viii. 38, 39. For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life,——nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And this union holds after death; Matth. xxii. 31, 32. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.

Q. 10. What is the fourth inference?

A. That in wronging and persecuting the saints, men wrong and persecute Christ himself; Acts. ix. 4. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

Q. 11. What is the fifth inference?

A. That in relieving and refreshing the saints, we relieve and refresh Christ himself; Matth. xxv. 35, 36. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; and I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Vers. 40. In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Q. 12. What is the last inference?

A. That there is a sympathy in Christ, under all the pressures and grievances of his people; Heb. iv. 15. We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Of Effectual Calling.

Quest. 31. WHat is effectual calling?

A. *Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our*

wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel.

Q. 1. What makes the difference between effectual and ineffectual calling?

A. Ineffectual calling is, when men have nothing but the external sound of the gospel; Matth. xx. 16. For many be called, but few chosen. Effectual is, when the Spirit works in conjunction with the word; John vi. 45. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God; every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

Q. 2. What is the first act of the Spirit in effectual calling?

A. Conviction of sin; John xvi. 8. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin.

Q. 3. Do the called of God hear any voice from heaven?

A. Ordinarily it is a call without sound, yet as efficacious as an audible voice from heaven.

Q. 4. What is the second act of the Spirit in our effectual calling?

A. The illumination of the mind in the knowledge of Christ; Acts xxvi. 18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.

Q. 5. In what things doth it enlighten them?

A. In this; That Christ is their only remedy; Acts iv. 12. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. And their all-sufficient remedy; Heb. vii. 25. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.

Q. 6. What is the third act?

A. His renewing of the sinner's will, and making it flexible; Psalm cx. 3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

Q. 7. Can no man come to Christ till thus be enabled?

A. No; it is not in the power of man's nature or will, till thus renewed and enabled; Eph. i. 19, 20. And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him on his own right hand in the heavenly places. John vi. 44. No man can come to me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him.

Q. 8. What ſort of men are moſt ordinarily called?

A. The poor and mean ones in the world; 1 Cor. i. 26. For ye ſee your calling, brethren, how that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe; and God hath choſen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.

Q. 9. What is the firſt inſtruction from it?

A. Souls effectually called are never loſt; Rom. xi. 29. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inſtruction?

A. All things co-operate to their good; Rom. viii. 28. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpoſe.

Q. 11. What is the third inſtruction?

A. It is dangerous to refuſe God's call; Prov. i. 24. Becauſe I have called, and ye have refuſed, I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inſtruction?

A. That Chriſtians are obliged to walk ſuitably to their heavenly calling; 1 Theſſ. ii. 12. That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

Of the Concomitants of Vocation.

Queſt. 32. WHat benefits do they that are effectually called partake of in this life?

A. *They that are effectually called, do in this life partake of juſtification, adoption, and ſanctification, and the ſeveral benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them.*

Q. 1. Are all that be effectually called, juſtified?

A. Yes; God juſtifies all, and every ſoul that obeys and anſwers his call; Rom. viii. 30. Whom he called, them he alſo juſtified.

Q. 2. What other benefits have the called in this life?

A. They are all the adopted children of God; Eph. i. 5. Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jeſus Chriſt, unto himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will.

Q. 3. Are thoſe all the benefits the called receive?

A. No; they are not only juſtified and adopted, but alſo ſanctified; 1 Cor. i. 30. But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.

Q. 4. Do theſe three bleſſings come ſingly to the called?

A. No; they are all accompanied with multitudes of other blessings flowing from them; Eph. i. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places in Christ.

Q. 5. What are the mercies flowing from justification?

A. They are great and manifold; Rom. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Q. 6. What are the benefits flowing from adoption?

A. Free access to God; Eph. iii. 12. In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. And a title to heaven; Rom. viii. 17. If children, then heirs.

Q. 7. What blessings accompany sanctification?

A. Union with Christ; Heb. ii. 11. For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one. And right to the inheritance; Acts xx. 32. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

Q. 8. What is the first lesson from hence?

A. That they are enemies to their own souls, who obey not the gospel call; 2 Thes. i. 8. In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. 9. What is the second lesson from hence?

A. That the estate of believers abounds with spiritual privileges; 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Q. 10. What is the third lesson from hence?

A. That all the believer's privileges are not in hope, but some in hand; 1 John iii. 1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Q. 11. What is the fourth lesson from hence?

A. The greatest sufferers for Christ have no reason to repent their call; Rom. viii. 18. For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

Q. 12. What is the last lesson from hence?

A. That we have infinite reason to bless God for the gospel,

by which we are called; 2 Theſſ. ii. 14. Whereunto he called you by our goſpel.

Of Juſtification.

Queſt. 33. WHAT is juſtification?

A. *Juſtification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our ſins, and accepteth us as righteous in his ſight, only for the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to us, and received by faith alone.*

Q. 1. What are the parts of juſtification?

A. It conſiſts of two parts. *Firſt*, The pardon of ſin; Acts xiii. 39. And by him all that believe are juſtified from all things, from which ye could not be juſtified by the law of Moſes. *Secondly*, The acceptation of our perſons as righteous; Rom. v. 1, 2, 3. Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom alſo we have acceſs by faith into this grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Q. 2. Whoſe act is it to juſtify ſinners?

A. It is the act of God alone; Rom. viii. 33. It is God that juſtifieth. Man's juſtifying of himſelf is nothing; Luke xvi. 15. And he ſaid unto them, Ye are they which juſtify yourſelves before men, but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly eſteemed amongſt men, is abomination in the ſight of God. Nor other mens juſtifying of us; Rev. iii. 1. I know thy works, that thou haſt a name to live, and art dead.

Q. 3. Is there any thing in man to merit his juſtification?

A. No; it is an act of free grace in God; Rom. iii. 24. Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. 4. If it be not for any inherent righteouſneſs, how then?

A. It is for the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to us; Rom. iv. 6. Even as David alſo deſcribeth the bleſſedneſs of the man unto whom God imputeth righteouſneſs without works.

Q. 5. How is Chriſt's righteouſneſs made ours?

A. By application of it to us by faith; Gal. ii. 16. Knowing that a man is not juſtified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt, even we have believed in Jeſus Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by the faith of Chriſt, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law ſhall no fleſh be juſtified.

Q. 6. Is it not partly by Chriſt's righteouſneſs made ours, and partly our own?

A. No; by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, without any mixture of ours; Rom. iii. 28. Therefore we conclude, that a man is juſtified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Q. 7. But doth not James ſay otherwiſe, James ii. 14. What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man ſay he hath faith and have not works; Can faith ſave him?

A. The two apoſtles contradict not one another; Paul ſpeaks of juſtification before God; and James of juſtifying our faith before men.

Q. 8. Is no regard then to be had to good works?

A. Yes, very great; they that believe, muſt be careful to maintain good works; Tit. iii. 8. That they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works. Theſe things are good and profitable unto men.

Q. 9. Why can none be juſtified by works?

A. Becauſe all are guilty before God; Rom. iii. 29. Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not alſo of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles alſo. And the law curſes all that are under guilt; Gal. iii. 10. Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Q. 10. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. The happy ſtate of believers who are now at peace with God; Rom. v. 1. Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And whom he juſtifieth he glorifieth. Rom. viii. 30. Whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. The excellency and neceſſity of faith; Rom. iii. 30. The circumciſion is juſtified by faith, and the uncircumciſion through faith.

Q. 12. What is the third inference?

A. That the greatneſs of ſin is no bar to faith, ſince it is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt that juſtifieth; 2 Cor. v. 21. For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we may be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.

Q. 13. What is the laſt inference?

A. That believers ought to be exceeding humble, and far from boaſting. The law of faith excludes boaſting; Rom. iii. 27. Where is boaſting then? It is excluded: By what law? of works? nay, but by the law of faith.

Of Adoption.

Quest. 34. WHat is adoption?

A. *Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the Sons of God.*

Q. 1. How many sorts of Sons are there?

A. There is one by generation, and another by adoption; John i. 12, 13. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Q. 2. What moves God to adopt any man?

A. Nothing but his free love; 1 John iii. 1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Q. 3. Is this privilege common to all men?

A. No; it is peculiar to them that receive him; John i. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.

Q. 4. What is the first property of adoption?

A. It is a costly relation; Gal. iv. 4. When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

Q. 5. What is the second property of adoption?

A. It is an high and honourable relation; 1 John iii. 1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Q. 6. What is the third property of adoption?

A. It is a free relation on God's part; Eph. i. 4, 5. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. And it makes us free; John viii. 36. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Q. 7. What is the fourth property of adoption?

A. It is a permanent relation; John viii. 35. The Son abideth in the house for ever.

Q. 8. What is the first privilege of the adopted?

A. They have an interest in God, as children in a father; 2 Cor. vi. 18. And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Q. 9. What is the second privilege?

A. Being God's sons, they are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; Rom. viii. 17. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

Q. 10. What is the third privilege?

A. Seasonable and sanctified afflictions; Heb. xii. 6. He scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Q. 11. What is the fourth privilege?

A. The attendance and ministry of angels; Heb. i. 14. Are they not all ministring spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Q. 12. What is the fifth privilege?

A. The assistance of the Spirit in prayer; Rom. viii. 15. For we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. And God's audience of their prayers; 1 John v. 14. And this is the confidence that we have in him, That if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.

Q. 13. What use should we make of this?

A. It teacheth us to carry ourselves as children, to our heavenly Father. *First*, In our imitation of him; Eph. v. 1. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. *Secondly*, In our submission to him; Heb. xii. 9. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh, who corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? *Thirdly*, In our dependance on him; Matth. v. 32. For your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.

Of Sanctification.

Quest. 35. WHat is sanctification?

A. *Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.*

Q. 1. What are the parts of sanctification?

A. Dying unto sin, and living unto God; Rom. vi. 11. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Q. 2. Who is the Author of sanctification?

A. God only; Jude ver. 1. To them that are sanctified by God the Father.

Q. 3. What is the instrument of it?

A. The word of God; John xvii. 17. ſanctify them thro' thy truth; thy word is truth.

Q. 4. What part of man is ſanctified?

A. Every part, both of ſoul and body; 1 Theſ. v. 23. And the very God of peace ſanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole ſpirit, ſoul and body be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. 5. Is ſanctification perfected at once?

A. No; but by degrees; 2 Pet. iii. 18. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. 6. When will it be made perfect?

A. When we come to heaven, and not before; 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 11. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away.

Q. 7. What are the ſigns of true ſanctification?

A. When it runs into all parts of our converſation; 1 Pet. i. 15. But as he which hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all maner of converſation. *Secondly*, And continues to the end; Rev. xxii. 11. Let him that is holy, be holy ſtill.

Q. 8. What is the inſeparable companion of ſanctification?

A. Righteouſneſs towards men; Luke i. 74, 75. That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs, and and righteouſneſs before him all the days of our life.

Q. 9. What is oppoſite to ſanctification?

A. All filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit; 2 Cor. vii. 1. Having therefore theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit.

Q. 10. What is the privilege of the ſanctified?

A. They are all elected, and ſhall be glorified; 1 Pet. i. 2, 4. Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through ſanctification of the Spirit-----to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for you.

Q. 11. What is the caſe of them who live and die unſanctified?

A. They ſhall never ſee God; Heb. xii. 14. Follow peace with all men, and holineſs; without which, no man ſhall ſee the Lord.

Q. 12. What differenceth true, from pretended ſanctification?

A. True ſanctification purgeth the heart from the love of ſin; Rom. vii. 15. For that which I do, I allow not. And the life from the dominion of ſin; Rom. vi. 19. As ye have yielded your members ſervants to uncleanneſs, and to iniqui-

ty, unto iniquity; even ſo now yield your members ſervants to righteouſneſs, unto holineſs.

Q. 13. May great ſinners be ſanctified?

A. Yes; the Spirit of God can ſanctify the vileſt heart; 1 Cor. vi. 11. And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified.

Of Aſſurance, the Fruit of Juſtification.

Queſt. 36. WHat are the benefits which in this life do either accompany, or flow from juſtification, adoption, and ſanctification?

A. *The benefits which in this life do either accompany, or flow from juſtification, adoption, and ſanctification, are aſſurance of God's love, peace of conſcience, joy in the holy Ghoſt, increaſe of grace, and perſeverance therein to the end.*

Q. 1. Is aſſurance poſſible to be attained in this life?

A. Yes; for ſome have had it; Cant. vi. 3. I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine. And all Chriſtians are commanded to ſtrive for it; 2 Pet. i. 10. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence, to make your calling and election ſure.

Q. 2. How many ſorts of aſſurance are there?

A. There is an objective aſſurance; 2 Tim. ii. 19. Nevertheleſs, the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And a ſubjective or perſonal aſſurance; Gal. ii. 20. Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.

Q. 3. Is perſonal aſſurance perfect in this life?

A. No; it admits of doubts and fears, which interrupts it, and it is not always at one height; 1 Cor. xiii. 10. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away.

Q. 4. On what teſtimony is perſonal aſſurance built?

A. Upon the teſtimony of God's Spirit witneſſing with ours; Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit itſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God.

Q. 5. Doth the Spirit make uſe of ſigns in us to aſſure us?

A. Yes; ordinarily he doth; 1 John iii. 14. We know that we are paſſed from death to life, becauſe we love the brethren. And ver. 24. Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

Q. 6. How is true aſſurance diſcerned from preſumption?

A. True aſſurance humbles the ſoul; Gal. ii. 20. I am crucified with Chriſt: nevertheleſs I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me. And makes the ſoul afraid of ſin; 2 Cor. vii.

1. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Q. 7. What is the usual season of assurance?

A. The time of greatest sufferings for Christ; 1 Pet. iv. 14. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon you.

Q. 8. Is personal assurance absolutely necessary to salvation?

A. No; a man may be saved, and in Christ, without it; Isa. l. 10. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.

Q. 9. What is the fruit of assurance?

A. Joy unspeakable amidst outward troubles; Rom. v. 11. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Q. 10. What sins usually eclipse our assurance?

A. Negligence in duty starves it; 2 Pet. i. 10. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure: For if ye do these things ye shall never fall. And sinning against light, stabs it; Psalm li. 8. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Q. 11. What is the first inference from this doctrine?

A. That no unregenerate person can have any assurance; for it is the fruit of justification, adoption, and sanctification.

Q. 12. What is the second inference?

A. That all the joys of heaven are not to come; but some communicated in this life; 1 Pet. i. 8. Whom having not seen ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

Q. 13. What is the third inference?

A. That assured believers need to be circumspect persons, that they grieve not the Spirit; Eph. iv. 30. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Of Peace of Conscience.

Quest. 1. WHat doth the word Peace signify in scripture?

A. In the language of the Old-Testament it signifies all temporal good; 1 Sam. xxv. 6. Peace be both to thee, and peace be in thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. And in the New-Testament all special good; as 2 Thess. iii. 16. Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always.

Q. 2. What are the kinds of ſpecial peace?

A. There is a twofold peace; one without us, by reconciliation; Rom. v. 1. Therefore, being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God. And peace within us, by way of conſolation; Col. iii. 15. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

Q. 3. What did our peace coſt Chriſt?

A. It coſt him bloody ſtripes and ſufferings; Iſa. liii. 5. The chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him; and by his ſtripes we are healed.

Q. 4. Can none have true peace but ſuch as are in him?

A. No; others may have falſe peace; Luke xi. 21. When a ſtrong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace. But believers only have true peace; Rom. v. 1. Therefore, being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. 5. Have all believers peace in their conſciences at all times?

A. No, they are always in a ſtate of peace, but have not always the ſenſe of peace; Iſa. l. 10. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light? Let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.

Q. 6. What is that which hinders the ſenſe of peace in believers?

A. Their ſins againſt the Lord, and grieving of his Spirit; Iſa. lix. 2. But your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God; and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

Q. 7. What maintains the ſtate of peace when the ſenſe of peace is loſt?

A. Chriſt's continual and potent interceſſion with the Father for us; 1 John ii. 12. My little children, theſe things write I unto you, that ye ſin not: And if any man ſin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.

Q. 8. What is the beſt way to maintain our peace with God?

A. Strict walking by goſpel rules; Gal. vi. 16. And as many as walk according to this rule; peace be on them.

Q. 9. Doth this peace come and go with outward peace?

A. No; we may enjoy this when no peace is to be had in the world; John xvi. 33. Theſe things I have ſpoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye ſhall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

Q. 10. What is the firſt inſtruction from hence?

A. That the wicked are in a ſad caſe at all times, but eſpecially in evil times; Iſa. lvii. 20, 21. But the wicked are like the troubled ſea when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt. There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond inſtruction from hence?

A. That the chief care of a Chriſtian ſhould be to keep his peace with God; Jer. xvii. 17. Be not a terror to me; thou art my hope in the day of evil.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inſtruction from hence?

A. Let the ſaints long to be in heaven, the ſtate of full and perfect peace; Iſa. lvii. 2. He ſhall enter into peace; they ſhall reſt in their beds, each one walking in his uprightneſs.

Of Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.

Queſt. 1. HOW many ſorts of joy are there among men?

A. There is a ſenſitive joy; Acts xiv. 17. Nevertheleſs he left not himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs. A ſinful joy; Prov. xv. 21. Folly is joy to him that is deſtitute of wiſdom. And a ſpiritual joy; Rom. v. 11. And not only ſo, but we alſo joy in God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. 2. Why is ſpiritual joy called joy in the holy Ghoſt?

A. Becauſe the holy Ghoſt is the author of it; Gal. v. 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, *&c.*

Q. 3. What is the firſt thing begets joy in the ſaints?

A. The firſt thing they joy in is, their juſtification before God; Iſa. lxi. 10. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my ſoul ſhall be joyful in my God; for he hath cloathed me with the garments of ſalvation, he hath covered me with the robes of righteouſneſs. Rom. v. 11. And not only ſo, but we alſo joy in God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Q. 4. What is the ſecond thing that breeds this joy?

A. Hope of glory breeds joy in the ſaints; Rom. v. 2. And rejoice, in hope of the glory of God.

Q. 5. What is the inſtrument by which the Spirit conveys this joy?

A. Faith is the inſtrument of it; Phil. i. 25. And having this confidence, I know that I ſhall abide and continue with you all, for your furtherance and joy of faith.

Q. 6. What is the firſt property of this joy?

A. It is joy unſpeakable, and full of glory; 1 Pet. i. 8.

believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.

Q. 7. What is the ſecond property of it?

A. That it is not in the power of men to deprive the ſaints of it; John xvi. 22. And your joy no man taketh from you.

Q. 8. What is the third property of it?

A. It makes the ſoul free and chearful in the ways of obedience; Pſal. cxix. 32. I will run the ways of thy commandments, when thou ſhalt enlarge my heart.

Q. 9. What is moſt deſtructive to a Chriſtian's joy?

A. Sin, eſpecially ſin againſt light; Pſalm li. 8. Make me to hear joy and gladneſs, that the bones which thou haſt broken may rejoice.

Q. 10. What ſhould be the main care of a Chriſtian in this world?

A. To maintain his joy in God to the laſt; Acts xx. 24. But none of theſe things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy.

Q. 11. Have not hypocrites their joys as well as real Chriſtians?

A. Yes; but the joy of the hypocrite is not grounded upon ſcripture-warrant, and will vaniſh away, and will come to nothing at laſt; John v. 35. He was a burning and a ſhining light; and ye were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoice in his light.

Q. 12. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. Let all that expect joy in the holy Ghoſt, ſee that they preſerve purity of conſcience and converſation; 2 Cor. i. 12. For our rejoicing is this, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our converſation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.

Q. 13. What is the laſt inference?

A. That religion is no melancholy thing, but the fountain of all joy and pleaſure; Prov. iii. 17. Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace.

Of the Increaſe of Grace.

Queſt. 1. DOth all true grace increaſe and grow?

A. Yes, it doth, like the morning light; Prov. iv. 18. The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day. And for that end, God hath appointed miniſters and ordinances; Eph. iv. 11, 12. And he gave ſome, apoſtles; and ſome, prophets; and ſome, evangeliſts; and ſome, paſtors and teachers; for

the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Q. 2. Cannot false, or seeming, grace grow?

A. It may spring up, and seem to flourish, for a time, but comes not to perfection; Luke viii. 14. And that which fell among thorns, are they, which when they have heard, go forth, and are choaked with the cares, and riches, and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

Q. 3. What is the first respect in which grace grows?

A. It grows by deeper rooting itself in the soul; Eph. iii. 17. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able, &c.

Q. 4. What is the second respect or manner of its growth?

A. It grows in respect of its greater fitness and readiness for acts of obedience; Col. i. 11. Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience, and long-suffering, with joyfulness.

Q. 5. What is the third respect or manner of its growth?

A. It grows in respect of its abilities to fix the mind more steadily on spiritual things. Hence grown Christians are called spiritual men; Gal. vi. 1. Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness.

Q. 6. Why must all true grace grow?

A. Because there is a stature to which Christians are appointed; Eph. iv. 13. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Q. 7. What are the causes of a Christian's growth?

A. Union with Christ; John xv. 4. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. And his blessings on the ordinances; Isa. lv. 10, 11. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. And providences; Phil. i. 19. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation thro' your prayers, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

Q. 8. May not true grace sometimes decay?

A. Yes, it may; Rev. ii. 4. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. But

not utterly; 1 John iii. 9. Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him.

Q. 9. What is the first inference from hence?

A. To bless God for gospel ordinances; Psalm xcii. 13, 14. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall flourish in the courts of our God; they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing.

Q. 10. What is the second inference?

A. Hence we see the miserable state of them, that grow worse and worse; Jude, ver. 12. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds: Trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the root.

Q. 11. What is the third inference?

A. Christians should not be discouraged at their weakness in grace, for they have a merciful Christ; Isaiah xlii. 3. A bruised reed shall he not break; and the smoaking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. And a sure promise; Job xvii. 9. The righteous also shall hold on his way; and he that hath clean hands, shall be stronger and stronger.

Q. 12. What is the last inference?

A. That all true Christians draw daily nearer and nearer to the heavenly and perfect state; 2 Cor. iv. 16. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day; Rom. xiii. 11. For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

Of Perseverance.

Quest. 1. WHat is perseverance to the end?

A. It is the steady and constant continuance of Christians in the ways of duty and obedience, amidst all temptations and discouragements to the contrary; Col. i. 23. If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I Paul am made a minister.

Q. 2. Do all that profess Christ, continue in him?

A. No; many that at first zealously profess him, afterwards fall away; John vi. 66. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

Q. 3. Why do not all persevere?

A. Because all professors have not a good root and foundation; Matth. xiii. 20, 21. But he that received the seed into sto-

ny places, the ſame is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himſelf, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation, or perſecution ariſeth becauſe of the word, by and by he is offended.

Q. 4. What is the firſt ground of the ſaints perſeverance?

A. God's electing love, in which they are given to Chriſt; John x. 29. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Q. 5. What is the ſecond ground of perſeverance?

A. The immortal nature of ſanctifying grace; John iv. 14. But whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt: but the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water ſpringing up into everlaſting life. 1 John iii. 9. For his ſeed remaineth in him.

Q. 6. What is the third ground of it?

A. The covenant of grace; Jer. xxxii. 40. And I will make an everlaſting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.

Q. 7. What is the fourth ground of it?

A. Chriſt's effectual interceſſion; Luke xxii. 32. But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.

Q. 8. Are there no declinings of grace in the ſaints?

A. Yes, there are; Rev. ii. 4. Nevertheleſs I have ſomewhat againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt left thy firſt love. Yet grace cannot be totally or finally loſt: For the ſeed of God remaineth in the ſanctified; 1 John iii. 9. Whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin; for his ſeed remaineth in him: And he cannot ſin; becauſe he is born of God.

Q. 9. Is there no hope of ſalvation for final apoſtates?

A. No, the goſpel gives none; Heb. x. 38. But if any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.

Q. 10. What is the firſt inſtruction from hence?

A. It warns all men to lay a good foundation, leſt the buildings of hope be overturned when the ſtorm comes; Matth. vii. 24, 25. Therefore, whoſoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wiſe man, which built his houſe upon a rock: And the rain deſcended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that houſe; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond inſtruction?

A. That all men ſhould look to themſelves, leſt they loſe the things which they have wrought; 2 John verſe 8. Look to yourſelves, that we loſe not theſe things which we

have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. 1 Cor. x. 12. Wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inſtruction?

A. Let no true Chriſtian be diſcouraged, how weak ſoever, for God is able to make him ſtand; Rom. xv. 4. Who art thou that judgeſt another man's ſervant? To his own maſter he ſtandeth or falleth; yea, he ſhall be holden up, for God is able to make him ſtand.

Of Perfection at Death.

Queſt. 37. WHat benefits do believers receive from Chriſt at their death?

A. *The ſouls of believers are at their death made perfect in holineſs, and do immediately paſs into glory; and their bodies being ſtill united to Chriſt, do reſt in their graves till the reſurrection.*

Q. 1. What is the ſtate of perfect holineſs?

A. It conſiſts in a perfect freedom from ſin, or the leaſt inclinations to ſin; Eph. v. 27. That he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.

Q. 2. Wherein elſe doth perfection conſiſt?

A. It conſiſts in the attainment of the higheſt meaſures and degrees of holineſs the creature is capable of; Eph. iv. 12, 13. For the perfecting of the ſaints,——Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.

Q. 3. Cannot this be attained whilſt in the body?

A. No, for here all our graces are imperfect; 2 Cor. xiii. 12. For now we ſee through a glaſs darkly; but then face to face. And we live at a diſtance from God; 2 Cor. v. 6. Whilſt we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord.

Q. 4. How is this attained at death?

A. At death the roots of ſin are pulled up out of the believer's nature; Heb. xii. 23. And to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.

Q. 5. Why muſt the ſoul be made perfect at death?

A. Becauſe the purity of the heavenly ſtate admits no ſin or imperfection; Rev. xxi. 27. And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Q. 6. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That death ſhould be lovely and deſirable in the eyes of believers; Phil. i. 23. Having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt; which is far better.

Q. 7. What is the ſecond inference?

A. That God hath provided ſingular relief for his people that now groan under their ſins, and many imperfections; 1 Cor. xiii. 12. For now we ſee through a glaſs darkly; but then face to face: Now I know in part; but then ſhall I know, even as I am known.

Q. 8. What is the third inference?

A. That the heavenly ſtate is infinitely above and beyond whatever we enjoy here; 1 Cor. ii. 9. But as it is written, eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

Q. 9. What is the fourth inference?

A. That believers are but at a ſmall diſtance from the ſatisfaction of all their deſires; Rom. xiii. 11. For now is our ſalvation nearer than when we believed.

Q. 10. What is the fifth inference?

A. That the ſaints ſhould earneſtly purſue that perfection, even in this imperfect ſtate; Phil. iii. 13, 14. Brethren, I count not myſelf to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth to thoſe things which are before, I preſs towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

Q. 11. What is the ſixth inference?

A. That death to the ſaints is better than life; Phil. i. 21. For to me to live is Chriſt, and to die is gain.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference?

A. That faith is abſolutely neceſſary to entitle us to this perfect ſtate.

Of immediate Glorification.

Queſt. 1. DO all that die in Chriſt immediately paſs into glory?

A. Yes, they do; Luke xxiii. 43. To day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe; Phil. i. 23. Having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt.

Q. 2. What is the firſt reaſon for their immediate glorification?

A. Becauſe heaven is prepared and ready for them; Matth. xxv. 34. Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Q. 3. What is the second reason for it?

A. Because at death they are as ready for heaven as ever they shall be; John ix. 4. I must work the work of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.

Q. 4. What is the third reason for it?

A. Because death else could not be gain, as it is, Phil. i. 21. For to me to live is Christ; and to die, is gain.

Q. 5. What is the fourth reason for it?

A. Because there is the same reason for all, as for any one: But some are immediately glorified; Luke xxiii. 43. To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

Q. 6. What is the fifth reason for it?

A. Because Christ longs for their coming to him, and they for his enjoyment; and these longings are in vain, if not satisfied; Rev. xxii. 17, 20. And the Spirit, and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth, say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come: And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. He which testifieth these things, saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen, Even so come, Lord Jesus.

Q. 7. What is the first instruction from hence?

A. That the apparitions of departed saints ordinarily are but fables: They wander not; Rev. iii. 12. Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.

Q. 8. What is the second inference?

A. That Purgatory is a groundless fable, and invention of men; and the scriptures alledged to countenance it, grosly abused; 1 Pet. iii. 19. By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.

Q. 9. What is the third inference?

A. That heaven must needs be a marvellous surprize to believers, how long soever they have conversed with it here.

Q. 10. What is the fourth inference?

A. The consideration of this should provoke saints to work hard to finish all they have to do on earth; Eccles. ix. 10. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Q. 11. What is the fifth inference?

A. That there is no reason to grieve excessively for departed saints; 1 Thes. iv. 14. Even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference?

A. That Chriſtleſs ones are immediately in hell; Luke xvi. 22, 23. The rich man alſo died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments.

Of Reſt in the Grave.

Queſt. 1. WHY muſt believers come to the grave?

A. Becauſe where ſin has been, death by the law muſt follow; Rom. v. 12. Wherefore, as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin; and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned. Rom. viii. 10. And if Chriſt be in you, the body is dead becauſe of ſin; but the Spirit is life, becauſe of righteouſneſs.

Q. 2. What is the firſt privilege of their bodies there?

A. It is the privilege of their bodies to be there in union with Chriſt; 1 Theſ. iv. 14. Them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him.

Q. 3. What is their ſecond privilege?

A. Their graves are places of reſt; not priſons, but beds of reſt; Iſa. lvii. 2. He ſhall enter into peace; they ſhall reſt in their beds, each one walking in his uprightneſs.

Q. 4. What is the firſt evil they reſt from?

A. All the toils, and troubles, and afflictions, of this life; Rev. xiv. 13. They may reſt from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Q. 5. What is the ſecond evil they reſt from?

A. They reſt from all perſecutions from men; Job iii. 17. There the wicked ceaſe from troubling; and there the weary be at reſt.

Q. 6. What is the third evil they reſt from?

A. They reſt from ſin, never to feel temptation or inclination to ſin; Heb. xii. 23. And to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.

Q. 7. How long ſhall the bodies reſt in the grave?

A. Not for ever, but till the day of the reſurrection; Job xix. 26. And though after my ſkin, worms deſtroy this body, yet in my fleſh ſhall I ſee God.

Q. 8. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That union with Chriſt redounds to the ſingular advantage of the body, as well as the ſoul; Rom. viii. 11. But if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Q. 9. What is the ſecond inference?

A. That death diſſolves not the union betwixt Chriſt and the ſouls or bodies of his; Matth. xxii. 32. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

Q. 10. What is the third inference?

A. That ſeeing our bodies are to have ſo long and ſo ſweet reſt in the grave, we ſhould not ſpare them in God's ſervice now; 2 Pet. i. 13, 14. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to ſtir you up, by putting you in remembrance: Knowing that ſhortly I muſt put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhewed me.

Q. 11. What is the fourth inference?

A. That Chriſtians ſhould neither too much fear their own, nor ſorrow for others death; Rom. viii. 38, 39. For I am perſuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,------nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord. 1 Theſ. iv. 13. But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

Of the Reſurrection.

Queſt. 1. IS the reſurrection a credible doctrine?

A. Yes, it is; Acts xxvi. 8. Why ſhould it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God ſhould raiſe the dead?

Q. 2. Why then doth it ſeem incredible to man?

A. Becauſe they err, not knowing the ſcriptures and the power of God; Mark xii. 24. Do ye not therefore err, becauſe ye know not the ſcriptures, nor the power of God? The power of God aſſures us it may be ſo, and the word of God tells it muſt be ſo.

Q. 3. Is it ſinful to doubt of the doctrine of the reſurrection?

A. It is not only a ſin to doubt it, but an hereſy to deny it, it being a fundamental article; Heb. vi. 2. And of the reſurrection of the dead. 1 Cor. xv. 13, 14. But if there be no reſurrection of the dead, then is Chriſt not riſen; and if Chriſt be not riſen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is alſo vain.

Q. 4. Who muſt riſe again at the reſurrection?

A. All men, good and bad, muſt riſe again; Acts xxiv. 15. And have hope towards God, which they themſelves alſo allow, that there ſhall be a reſurrection of the dead, both of the juſt and the unjuſt. Rev. xx. 12, 13, 14. And I ſaw the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God, &c.

Q. 5. What is the firſt difference betwixt the reſurrection of the juſt and unjuſt?

A. Saints riſe by virtue of their union with Chriſt; Rom. viii. 11. But if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you: But the wicked by his power.

Q. 6. What is the ſecond difference?

A. The ſecond and main difference will be in the contrary ends to which they riſe; ſome to life, and ſome to condemnation; Dan. xii. 2. And many of them that ſleep in the duſt of the earth ſhall awake, ſome to everlaſting life, and ſome to ſhame, and everlaſting contempt.

Q. 7. What is the glory to which ſaints bodies ſhall be raiſed?

A. In the likeneſs of Chriſt's glorious body; Phil. iii. 21. Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like to his glorious body.

Q. 8. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That every man ſhould ſtrive to the uttermoſt to attain to the reſurrection of the juſt; Phil. iii. 10, 11. That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection, and the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain to the reſurrection of the dead.

Q. 9. What is the ſecond inference?

A. Comfort to them that now groan under manifold diſtempers, and deformities of body; they being made equal to angels; Mark xii. 25. For when they ſhall riſe from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels which are in heaven.

Q. 10. What is the third inference?

A. Get union with Chriſt by faith, as you expect a joyful reſurrection; John xi. 25. Jeſus ſaid unto her, I am the reſurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live.

Q. 11. What is the fourth inference?

A. Saints ſhould not fear death; Gen. xlvi. 3. Fear not to go down into Egypt.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference?

A. Employ your bodies for good now.

Of Chriſt's acknowledging Believers.

Queſt. 38. WHat benefit do believers receive from Chriſt at the reſurrection?

A. *At the reſurrection believers being raiſed up in glory, ſhall*

be openly acknowledged, and acquitted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly bleſſed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity.

Q. 1. What is it to be acknowledged by Chriſt?

A. It is Chriſt's owning of the ſpecial relation betwixt him and them; Mat. xxv. 34. Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Q. 2. Whom will Chriſt acknowlege for his?

A. Such as confeſs Chriſt now; Mat. x. 32. Whoſoever therefore ſhall confeſs me before men, him will I confeſs alſo before my Father which is in heaven.

Q. 3. Before whom will Chriſt confeſs them?

A. Before his Father, angels and men; Rev. iii. 5. He that overcometh, the ſame ſhall be cloathed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confeſs his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Q. 4. Who ſhall be denied by Chriſt in that day?

A. All that now deny Chriſt, ſhall be denied by him; 2 Tim. ii. 12. If we deny him, he alſo will deny us. Tit. i. 16. They profeſs that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Q. 5. Why will Chriſt openly acknowledge them?

A. To wipe off all aſperſions and cenſures that now are caſt upon them; Iſaiah lxvi. 5. Your brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my name's ſake, ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified; but he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.

Q. 6. What will be the effect of Chriſt's acknowledgment?

A. It will put a full end to all doubts, fears, and jealouſies of themſelves; 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. But with me it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not my ownſelf; for I know nothing by myſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified; but he that judgeth me, is the Lord.

Q. 7. What other effect will it produce in them?

A. Joy unſpeakable and tranſcendent: hence called time of refreſhing; Acts iii. 19. When the time of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.

Q. 8. Is this the only time Chriſt acknowledgeth them?

A. No; he acknowledgeth them by his Spirit's teſtimony now, but that is private in their boſoms; Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit itſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirits, that we are the children of God.

Q. 9. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. To warn all how they paſs raſh cenſures on Chriſt's ſervants; Pſal. lxxiii. 15. If I ſay, I will ſpeak this, behold I ſhall offend againſt the generation of thy children.

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inference?

A. Let none be afraid or aſhamed to confeſs the perſon, office, or any truth of Chriſt, for any loſs or danger that may threaten them; Luke xii. 8, 9. Alſo I ſay unto you, Whoſoever ſhall confeſs me before men, him ſhall the Son of man alſo confeſs before the angels of God. But he that denieth me before men, ſhall be denied before the angels of God.

Q. 11. What is the third inference?

A. Let Chriſtians abound in good works. Every act of charity for Chriſt ſhall be acknowledged by him in the day of judgment; Matth xxv. 35. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink; I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference?

A. Let all Chriſtians love and long for the day of Chriſt's appearing; 2 Tim. iv. 8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto them alſo that love his appearing.

Of Chriſt's acquitting Believers.

Queſt. 1. WHat is it to be acquitted by Chriſt?

A. It is to be diſcharged and cleared from all the guilt of ſin, and puniſhment due to it by the law, upon the account of Chriſt's righteouſneſs imputed by God, and received by faith; Rom. v. 1. Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Rom. viii. 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus.

Q. 2. How many ways are believers acquitted?

A. They are acquitted now in the court of heaven; Rom. viii. 33. Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth. In the court of their own conſciences; 1 John iii. 21. Beloved, if our hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. And in the day of judgment: both particular, Heb. ix. 27. As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. And general; Acts iii. 19. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out. Their ſins are then blotted out.

Q. 3. How doth Chriſt's acquittance now, differ from that at judgment?

A. They differ in reſpect of publicneſs; this is ſecret in

the believer's boſom, and that open before men and angels; Rev. iii. 5. I will confeſs his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Q. 4. What is the ſecond difference?

A. They differ in reſpect of ſubjective certainty and aſſurance. A believer may doubt of this, but not of that; 1 Cor. iv. 4, 5. For I know nothing of myſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified; but he that judgeth me, is the Lord; therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come.

Q. 5. What is the third difference betwixt them?

A. They differ in point of conſolation: this always bears proportion to the certainty of it. Hence that day is called the time of refreſhing; when Chriſt blots out their ſins by ſentencial juſtification; Acts iii. 19. Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.

Q. 6. Do believers then lie under condemnation till that day?

A. No; they are truly and fully juſtified now; John v. 24. He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation; but is paſſed from death unto life. But this ſentence is not yet publiſhed by Chriſt's own mouth, as it ſhall be then.

Q. 7. On what account ſhall they be acquitted in that day?

A. On the very ſame account and ſcore they are now, *viz.* For the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt in the way of free grace; Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of his grace.

Q. 8. Muſt the ſaints be ſummoned to Chriſt's bar in that day?

A. Yes; they muſt appear as well as others; 2 Cor. v. 10. For we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt. But not to the ſame end; John v. 29. And ſhall come forth; they that have done good, unto the reſurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the reſurrection of damnation.

Q. 9. What is the firſt inference hence?

A. How ſure is a believer's juſtification, being ſo ratified privately and publicly in this world, and that to come.

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inference?

A. Though the day of judgment be awfully ſolemn, it ſhould not be dreadful to believers: they ſhould look for, and haſten to the coming of the day of God; 2 Pet. iii. 12. Looking for, and haſting unto the coming of the day of God, *&c.*

Q. 11. What is the third inference?

A. That faith is a grace of abſolute neceſſity, and unſpeakable excellency; Rom. v. 1, 2. Therefore being juſtified by faith, we

have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; by whom alſo we have acceſs by faith into this grace wherein we ſtand.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference?

A. All unbelievers are in a miſerable ſtate now; John iii. 18. He that believeth not, is condemned already. And worſe in the world to come; Matth. xxv. 41. Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

Of the full enjoyment of God.

Queſt. 1. WHat doth perfect bleſſedneſs ſuppoſe and imply?

A. It ſuppoſes the total freedom of believers from all the moral evil of ſin; Eph. v. 27. That he might preſent you to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot nor wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, but that it ſhould be holy, and without blemiſh. And from all the penal evils of ſuffering; Rev. xxi. 4. And God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain, for the former things are paſſed away.

Q. 2. What elſe is implied in perfect bleſſedneſs?

A. It implies the full and perfect enjoyment of God; 1 Cor. xv. 28. And when all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Q. 3. What is it for God to be all in all?

A. It implies three things in it. *Firſt*, That all the ſaints ſhall be filled and ſatisfied from God alone. *Secondly*, That there ſhall be no need of other things out of which they were wont to fetch comfort. *Thirdly*, That all other things, as heaven, angels, ſaints, ſhall be loved and enjoyed in God.

Q. 4. In what reſpect ſhall they enjoy God in heaven?

A. They ſhall have the glorious and immediate preſence of God with them; Rev. xxi. 3. God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God.

Q. 5. In what other reſpects ſhall they enjoy God?

A. They ſhall ſee him as he is; 1 John iii. 2. We ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is.

Q. 6. What will ſuch a viſion of God produce?

A. It will produce perfect conformity in them to God; 1 John iii. 2. When he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is. And perfect joy will reſult from hence; Pſalm xvi. 11. In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy; at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.

Q. 7. Do not the saints enjoy God here?

A. Yes, they do; but not so as they shall enjoy him in heaven; 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Q. 8. What are the special differences between the saints communion with God here, and that in heaven?

A. Their communion with God here is clogged with sin; Rom. vii. 21. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. Here it is not constant; Psalm xxii. 1. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Nor is it satisfying; but in heaven it will be pure, constant, and satisfying.

Q. 9. How long shall they there enjoy God?

A. Not for days, years, ages, but for ever and ever; 1 Thess. iv. 17. And so shall we be ever with the Lord.

Q. 10. What is the first instruction from hence?

A. That the world is not the place of the saints rest and satisfaction; Heb. iv. 9. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. 2 Cor. v. 2, 6. For in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our house, which is from heaven: therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

Q. 11. What is the second instruction from hence?

A. That death is a singular benefit to the saints; and though it be an enemy to nature, yet it is the medium to glory; 2 Cor. v. 4. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Q. 12. What is the third instruction hence?

A. The necessity of faith and regeneration in this world. None shall be raised up in glory, acknowledged, acquitted, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God, but believers; Rom. viii. 30. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Heb. xii. 14. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

Of Man's Duty to God.

Quest. 39. WHat is the duty that God requireth of man?

A. *The duty which God requireth of man, is obedience to his revealed will.*

Q. 1. Is obedience to God's will the duty of every man?

A. It is unqueſtionably the duty of every man to obey the will of God, ſo far as he hath made it known to him; Micah vi. 8. He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.

Q. 2. On what account is man's obedience due to God?

A. It is due to him, *Firſt*, as he is our Creator, in whom we live, and move, and have our being; Acts xvii. 27, 28. *Secondly*, As he is our Benefactor, from whom we receive all our mercies; Deut. xxviii. 47. Becauſe thou ſervedſt not the Lord thy God with joyfulneſs and with gladneſs of heart, for the abundance of all things therefore ſhalt thou ſerve thine enemies, which the Lord ſhall ſend againſt thee, in hunger, thirſt, and in nakedneſs, and in want of all things. *Thirdly*, As he is our Lord, and law-giver; James iv. 12. There is one Law-giver, who is able to ſave and to deſtroy.

Q. 3. Is obedience due to none but God only?

A. Yes; ſubjects muſt obey their lawful magiſtrates; Rom. xiii. 1. Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; The powers that be, are ordained of God. People their miniſters; Heb. xiii. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves, for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give an account. Children their parents; Eph. vi. 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. But not as they are to obey God.

Q. 4. What is the difference betwixt our obedience to God's commands, and men's?

A. We are to obey God, chiefly and ſupremely, for his own ſake, but creatures ſecondarily, and for God's ſake; 1 Pet. ii. 13. Submit yourſelves to every ordinance of men for the Lord's ſake. And Eph. vi. 1. Children obey your parents [in the Lord,] for this is right.

Q. 5. What muſt we do when the commands of God and men fall croſs to one another?

A. In that caſe we muſt yield our obedience to God, and not to man, whatever we ſuffer for it; Acts iv. 19. Whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

Q. 6. Why muſt we obey God rather than man?

A. Becauſe God is the ſupreme and ſovereign Lord of our conſciences; and no creature hath power to command our obedience but in, and from him; Iſa. xxxii. 22. For the Lord

is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our king, he will ſave us.

Q. 7. Have the people liberty to compare the laws of God and men, and judge how they agree, or differ?

A. Yes; their judgment of diſcretion is both commanded; 1 Cor. i. 10, 15. I ſpeak as to wiſe men; judge ye what I ſay. And commended; Acts xvii. 11. Theſe were more noble than thoſe in Theſſalonica, in that they received the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the ſcriptures daily, whether thoſe things were ſo.

Q. 8. What is the only rule for our obedience to God?

A. The will of God revealed in the ſcriptures is our only rule of obedience; Iſa. viii. 20. To the law and to the teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.

Q. 9. But if a man have a voice, a viſion, or a dream, ſeeming to hint the ſecret will of God, may he not obey it?

A. Yes; if it be conſonant to the revealed will of God in the word, otherwiſe not; Deut. xxix. 29. The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God; but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

Q. 10. What is the firſt inſtruction from hence?

A. That it is highly ſinful and dangerous to diſobey the known will of God in any thing; Rom. i. 18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs. Luke xii. 47. And that ſervant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond inſtruction?

A. That is a bleſſed man, who conſcientiouſly labours to obey the will of God, ſo far as he can diſcover it; John xiii. 17. If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them. Gal. vi. 16. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy.

Q. 12. What is the third inference?

A. It is highly ſinful and dangerous to command others, or obey commands from others, which are not according to God's command; Hoſea v. 11. Ephraim is oppreſſed, and broken in judgment, becauſe he willingly walked after the commandment. Jer. vii. 31. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the ſon of Hinnom, to burn

their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.

Of the Moral Law.

Quest. 40, and 41. WHat did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

A. *The rule which God at first revealed to man for his obedience, was the moral law.*

Q. 41. Wherein is the moral law summarily comprehended?

A. *The moral law is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.*

Q. 1. Is every man under the direction and obligation of a law?

A. Yes; man being a reasonable creature, is capable of, and fitted for government by law, which other creatures are not; and being an accountable creature to God, must needs be under a law; Rom. ii. 15. Which shew the works of the law written in their hearts; their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.

Q. 2. How could man be under a law before the law was given by Moses?

A. Before ever the law was given at Sinai, all the race of Adam had a law written in their hearts, *viz.* the light of reason, and dictates of natural conscience; Rom. ii. 14. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves. And besides this, the church had the revealed will of God to direct them; 2 Pet. i. 19, 20. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

Q. 3. What is the meaning of the moral law?

A. It is not a law to direct and order our manners; but a law that binds universally and perpetually, as the ten commandments do those to whom they are promulged, and the light of nature doth all others; Rom. ii. 14. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves. Luke xvi. 17. It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

Q. 4. Why is it ſaid to be ſummarily comprehended in the ten commandments?

A. Becauſe much more is included in every command, than is expreſt, as our Saviour ſhews in his expoſition of it; Matth. xxii 40. On theſe two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Q. 5. Doth the moral law bind Chriſtians under the goſpel?

A. Yes, it doth, as a rule to order their converſations by; Jam. ii. 8, 9, 10. If ye fulfil the royal law according to the ſcripture, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf; ye do well: But if ye have reſpect to perſons, ye commit ſin, and are convinced of the law as tranſgreſſors; for whoſoever ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all.

Q. 6. Is the moral law the ſame thing with the covenant of works, and impoſed for the ſame end?

A. God never deſigned the law to be the way of man's juſtification ſince the fall; Gal. iii. 21, 22. Is the law then againſt the promiſes of God? God forbid! for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteouſneſs would have been by the law; but the ſcripture hath concluded all under ſin, that the promiſe by faith of Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that believe. But it was promulged to convince man of ſin; Rom. vii. 7. What ſhall we ſay then? Is the law ſin? God forbid! Nay, I had not known ſin, but by the law; for I had not known luſt, except the law had ſaid, Thou ſhalt not covet. And bring them to Chriſt; Gal. iii. 24. Wherefore the law was our ſchool-maſter, to bring us unto Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by faith.

Q. 7. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. Hence we learn the abominable nature of Popery. The Pope being that lawleſs one, who will not be bound by the laws of God himſelf; 2 Theſ. ii. 8. Then ſhall that wicked one be revealed whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the Spirit of his mouth, and ſhall deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming; but aſſumes power to diſpenſe with God's laws to others.

Q. 8. What is the ſecond inference hence?

A. That man dieth not as beaſts die; which are under no moral law, and therefore capable of no ſin; but muſt come to judgment after death; Eccleſ. iii. 21. Who knoweth the ſpirit of man that goeth upward, and the ſpirit of the beaſt, that goeth downward to the earth? Heb. ix. 27. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, ſo after this the judgment.

Q. 9. What is the third inference hence?

A. That though the actions of men naturally conſidered are

tranſient, yet their conſequences and effects are permanent; an act is ſoon done, a word ſoon ſpoken, a thought ſoon thought; but when done, ſpoken or thought they are placed, to account; Gal. vi. 7, 8. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatſoever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap; for he that ſoweth to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; but he that ſoweth to the ſpirit, ſhall of the ſpirit reap life everlaſting.

Q. 10. What is the fourth inference from hence?

A. That God will proceed with men by different rules in the day of judgment, according to the different laws they lived under in this world; Rom. ii. 12. For as many as have ſinned without law ſhall alſo periſh without law; and as many as have ſinned in the law, ſhall be judged by the law.

Q. 11. What is the fifth inference from hence?

A. That thoſe who have ſinned againſt the cleareſt light, and beſt helps, will, if they die impenitent, be judged to the greateſt miſery; Matth. xi. 23. And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, ſhall be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. Heb. ii. 3. How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?

Q. 12. What is the ſixth inference from hence?

A. That as we are to prize the moral law highly, as a rule of life; Pſalm cxix. 105. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path: So are we to bleſs God for the goſpel diſpenſation, by which only we can attain to juſtification and ſalvation; Heb. xii. 22. But ye are come to mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, to an innumerable company of angels.

Of love to God and Man.

Queſt. 42. WHat is the ſum of the ten commandments?

A. *The ſum of the ten commandments is to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, with all our ſoul, with all our ſtrength, and with all our mind; and our neighbour as ourſelves.*

Q. 1. What is the ſum of the ten commandments?

A. To love the Lord our God with a ſupreme love, and men with a ſincere love, in and for him; Matth. xxii. 37, 38. Jeſus ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind. This is the firſt and great commandment: The ſecond is like unto it; Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf.

Q. 2. What is the firſt thing contained in our ſupreme love to God?

A. It implies the loving of God purely and abſolutely for himſelf. The excellencies that are in him; Cant. i. 3. Thy name is as ointment poured forth; therefore the virgins love thee. And the benefits we receive from him; Pſalm cxvi. 1. I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voice and my ſupplication.

Q. 3. What is the ſecond property of this ſupreme love?

A. Supreme love devotes the whole man to God and Chriſt: So that in life and death that man deſigns the glory of God as his main end; Rom. xiv. 7, 8. For none of us liveth to himſelf, and no man dieth to himſelf; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.

Q. 4. What is the third property of ſupreme love?

A. It cauſes the ſoul to depreciate and ſlight all other things in compariſon of God's glory, and an intereſt in Chriſt; Acts xx. 24. But none of theſe things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my courſe with joy; Phil. iii. 8. I count all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord.

Q. 5. What is the fourth property of ſupreme love?

A. It centers the ſoul in God as its only reſt; Pſalm cxvi. 7. Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul. And cannot be ſatisfied till it come to the full enjoyment of him; 2 Theſ. iii. 5. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Chriſt.

Q. 6. Why muſt we love God with a ſupreme love?

A. Becauſe ſuch a love only ſuits the tranſcendent excellency of God; commands all we are and have for God; and is the only love that will continue to the end; Rom. viii. 35. Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?

Q. 7. What is it to love our neighbour as ourſelves?

A. It is the exact obſervation and practice of the golden rule of Chriſt; Matth. vii. 12. Therefore all things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them; for this is the law and the prophets.

Q. 8. Are all men to be loved alike, and with the ſame degree of love?

A. No; tho' we muſt love all men with the love of benevolence, yet the ſaints only with the love of complacency; Pſal. xvi. 3. But to the ſaints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight. Pſalm xv. 4. In whoſe

eyes a vile perſon is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. And to ſuch we muſt eſpecially do good; Gal. vi. 10. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, eſpecially unto them who are of the houſhold of faith.

Q. 9. What is the firſt inſtruction from hence?

A. Hence we learn the excellency of divine love. Moſes expreſſes the whole duty of man in ten commandments: Chriſt hangs the whole law upon theſe two, love to God and our neighbour; Mark xii. 30, 31. And thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy ſtrength: This is the firſt commandment. And the ſecond is like, namely this, Thou ſhalt love thy neigbour as thyſelf: There is none other commandment greater than theſe. And the apoſtle reduces theſe two into one; Gal. v. 14. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this. Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf.

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. It convinces the holieſt of men how far ſhort they come in their obedience to the rule of duty, and therein the law was our ſchool-maſter to bring us to Chriſt, Gal. iii. 24.

Q. 11. What is the third inference from hence?

A. It diſcovers the excellency and perfection of the law of God; Pſalm xix. 7. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul: And that we are highly to honour and magnify it as a rule of duty, though we muſt utterly renounce it as the way of our juſtification.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference from hence?

A. That there is nothing too dear for a Chriſtian in this world, but he muſt give it up by ſelf-denial, when it comes in competition with his ſupreme love to God; Luke xiv. 26. If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and ſiſters, yea, and his own life alſo, he cannot be my diſciple; *(i. e.)* Love them leſs than me.

Of the Preface to the ten Commandments.

Queſt. 43. WHat is the preface to the ten commandments?

A. *The preface to the ten commandments is in theſe words, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage.*

Q. 44. What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us?

A. *The preface to the ten commandments teacheth us, that*

becauſe God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments.

Q. 1. Why doth God uſe arguments and inducements to win men to the obedience of his laws?

A. Becauſe he loves to work on man as a rational creature, according to the principles of his nature; Hoſ. xi. 4. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love: And becauſe he delights in none but free and chearful obedience; Pſal. cx. 3. Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.

Q. 2. What is the firſt argument in this preface?

A. It is the ſovereignty of the Law-giver, [I am the Lord,] which ſhould awe the heart of every man to obedience; James iv. 12. There is one Law-giver, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy.

Q. 3. What is the ſecond argument to obedience?

A. Our propriety in God by covenant, [I am the Lord thy God;] this obligeth to obedience, and aggravateth diſobedience; Pſalm l. 7. Hear, O my people, and I will ſpeak; O Iſrael, and I will teſtify againſt thee: I am God, even thy God. Hoſea ix. 1. For thou haſt gone a whoring from thy God.

Q. 4. What is the third argument unto obedience?

A. The benefits of redemption that they receive from God. Benefits perſuade to duty; and the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance, Rom. ii. 4.

Q. 5. How can deliverance out of Egypt, be an argument to them that never were in Egypt?

A. As that deliverance was a type of our deliverance, ſo it is an argument to us, and an argument from the leſs to the greater; for it obligeth us more than them; Luke i. 74, 75. That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our life.

Q. 6. What is that deliverance we have? and how doth it oblige us to obedience?

A. Our deliverance is not from Egypt, but from hell; Col. i. 13. Who hath delivered us from the power of darkneſs, and hath tranſlated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. And our perſons are bought by the Redeemer to glorify God; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghoſt, which is in you? For ye are bought with a price: Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.

Q. 7. Is it not mercenary to ſerve God upon the account of benefits received, or to be received?

A. He that maketh religious duties mediums to attain carnal advantages only, is of a worſe than mercenary ſpirit; Hoſea vii. 14. And they have not cried unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds: They aſſemble themſelves for corn and wine, and they rebel againſt me. But to be quickened by mercy to duty is not mercenary, but evangelical; Hoſea iii. 5. They ſhall fear the Lord, and his goodneſs.

Q. 8. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That great is the condeſcenſion of God to man, that he will uſe arguments to induce him to obedience, who might exact it only by his ſovereignty, and juſtly damn us for our diſobedience; 2 Cor. v. 20. Now then we are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us: We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.

Q. 9. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. That the more mercy any receive from God, the more obligations are laid on them to obey him; Pſalm cxvi. 1, 2. I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voice, and my ſupplications: Becauſe he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

Q. 10. What is the third inference from hence?

A. The more mercies and favours any man ſins againſt, the greater is that man's ſin, and the ſorer will be his puniſhment; Amos iii. 2. You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will puniſh you for all your iniquities.

Q. 11. What is the fourth inference from hence?

A. That God's expectations are greater, where his mercies and favours have been ſo; Iſa. v. 4. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore when I looked that it ſhould bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference from hence?

A. That memorials of God's mercies are to be kept by us, to provoke us to conſtant and chearful duties of obedience; Exod. xvii. 14. And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearſe it in the ears of Joſhua. Pſalm ciii. 2, 3. Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul, and forget not all his benefits.

Of the firſt Commandment.

Queſt. 45. WHich is the firſt commandment?

A. *The firſt commandment is, Thou ſhalt have no other gods before me.*

Q. 1. What is the firſt duty enjoined in the firſt commandment?

A. It is to know and acknowledge the exiſtence or being of God, and conſequently condemns all atheiſm, both in judgment and practice; Heb. xi. 6. For he that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him. Pſalm xiv. 1. The fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God.

Q. 2. What is the ſecond duty of the firſt commandment?

A. It requires all men to know and acknowledge the unity of God; Deut. vi. 4. Hear, O Iſrael, the Lord our God is one Lord. And condemns polytheiſm, or plurality of gods; 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many); but to us there is but one God.

Q. 3. Whence ſprang the opinion of more gods than one at firſt in the world?

A. It ſprang from ignorance of God's omnipreſence and omnipotence. Hence came their vain imaginations; Rom. i. 21. Becauſe that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened. They thought the preſence and power of God might reach one place, and not another; 1 Kings xx. 23. And the ſervants of the king of Syria ſaid unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills, therefore they were ſtronger than we: But let us fight againſt them in the plain, and ſurely we ſhall be ſtronger than they.

Q. 4. What were the firſt creatures worſhipped as gods?

A. Probably the heavenly bodies, ſun, moon, and ſtars, becauſe of their ſplendor and influences. Theſe, as heralds, do proclaim God to the world; Pſalm xix. 1, 2. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament ſheweth his handywork: Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledge. And theſe meſſengers of God were miſtaken for God himſelf; Job xxxi. 26, 27, 28. If I beheld the ſun when it ſhined, or the moon walking in brightneſs, and my heart hath been ſecretly enticed, or my mouth hath kiſſed my hand; this alſo were an iniquity for I ſhould have denied the God that is above.

Q. 5. What doth theſe words [before me] import?

A. It notes God's perfect knowledge and abhorrence of all idolatry, or worſhipping of another God, as what he cannot endure to behold; Jer. xliv. 3, 4. Becauſe of their wickedneſs

which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense to serve other gods whom they knew not, neither they, you, nor your fathers. Howbeit, I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early, and sending them, saying, Oh do no not this abominable thing that I hate.

Q. 6. Are none guilty of this sin but heathenish idolaters?

A. Yes; all that place their supreme love or trust in any creature, make that creature their God; and in scripture are called idolaters, Col. iii. 5. And covetousness, which is idolatry. Phil. iii. 19. Whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

Q. 7. How doth the idolatry forbidden in the first, differ from that forbidden in the second commandment?

A. The idolatry forbidden in the first commandment is a sin respecting the object of worship, when we set up any thing in the place of God, which by nature is not God; Gal. iv. 8. Howbeit, then when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But that against the second commandment is, when we pretend to worship the true God, but do it by such means, and in such a manner as he hath not required, or hath forbidden; Exod. xxxii. 4. And he received them at their hands, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf; and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

Q. 8. What is the first inference from the first commandment?

A. That it is a special mercy to be brought forth in a land where the true God is known and worshipped; Psalm cxlvii. 20. He hath not dealt so with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them; praise ye the Lord.

Q. 9. What is the second inference from the first commandment?

A. That it is a great and dreadful sin to live without the worship of God in the world; Eph. ii. 12. That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

Q. 10. What is the third inference from the first commandment?

A. That Christians must not comply with idolatrous and superstitious worship, when they are cast into idolatrous places, how great soever the danger be; Psalm xvi. 4. Their sorrows shall be multiplied, that hasten after another god; their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their name into my lips.

Q. 11. What is the fourth inference from hence?

A. That the ſupreme love, fear, and truſt of the ſoul, is God's peculiar right and due. Whoſoever places them on any other beſides God, is guilty of a very heinous and great ſin againſt him; 1 John ii. 15. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Compared with Job xxxi. 24,—28. If I have made gold my hope, or have ſaid to the fine gold, thou art my confidence; this alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the judge; for I ſhould have denied the God that is above.

Q. 12. What is the fifth inference from hence?

A. That God's eye diſcovers the cloſeſt idolatry in the world, whether it be in ſecret actions; Ezek. viii. 12. Haſt thou ſeen what the ancients of the houſe of Iſrael do in the dark? Every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they ſay, the Lord ſeeth us not, the Lord hath forſaken the earth. Or inward affections; Col. iii. 5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs, which is idolatry.

Q. 13. What is the ſixth inference from hence?

A. That an high and full condition in the world, is a dangerous condition, and lies moſt expoſed to the danger of heart-idolatry; Prov. xxx. 9. Leſt I be full, and deny thee, and ſay, who is the Lord? Mark x. 24. How hard is it for them that truſt in riches to enter into the kingdom of heaven?

Q. 14. What is the laſt inference?

A. That in covenanting with God, and avouching him for our God, we muſt wholly renounce all others, and take God alone for our portion, and object of our love and dependance; Hoſea iii. 3. Thou ſhalt not be for another man; ſo will I alſo be for thee. Luke xiv. 33. So likewiſe, whoſoever he be of you that forſaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my diſciple.

Of the ſecond Commandment.

Queſt. 49. WHich is the ſecond commandment?

A. *The ſecond commandment is,* [*Thou ſhalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeneſs of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou ſhalt not bow down thyſelf to them, nor ſerve them: For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, viſiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,*

and ſhewing mercy unto thouſands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.]

Queſt. 50. What is required in the ſecond commandment?

A. *The ſecond commandment requireth, the receiving, obſerving, and keeping pure and entire all ſuch religious worſhip and ordinances, as God hath appointed in his word.*

Queſt. 51. What is forbidden in the ſecond commandment?

A. *The ſecond commandment forbiddeth the worſhipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in his word.*

Queſt. 52. What are the reaſons annexed to the ſecond commandment?

A. *The reaſons annexed to the ſecond commandment are, God's ſovereignty over us, his propriety in us, and the zeal he hath to his own worſhip.*

Q. 1. What is the ſin eſpecially forbidden in the ſecond commandment?

A. The ſin here forbidden, is the corruption of God's worſhip, by making any ſimilitude of any perſon in the Godhead, and performing divine worſhip before it, or to it; Exod. xxxii. 8. They have turned aſide quickly out of the way which I commanded them: They have made them a molten calf, and have worſhipped it, and have ſacrificed thereunto, and ſaid, theſe be thy gods, O Iſrael, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. Deut. iv. 15, 16. Take ye therefore good heed unto yourſelves (for he ſaw no manner of ſimilitude on the day that the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb, out of the midſt of the fire) leſt ye corrupt yourſelves and make you a graven image, the ſimilitude of any figure, the likeneſs of male or female.

Q. 2. What is the ſecond ſin forbidden in this commandment?

A. The ſecond ſin againſt this commandment is will-worſhip, conſiſting in the addition of man's inventions to the worſhip of God, as a part thereof; Matth. xv. 9. But in vain they do worſhip me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Col. ii. 20, 21, 22, 23. Wherefore if ye be dead with Chriſt from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye ſubject to ordinances, (Touch not, taſte not, handle not, which all are to periſh with the uſing) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a ſhew of wiſdom in will-worſhip and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the ſatisfying of the fleſh.

Q. 3. But if thoſe additions be for the more decent worſhip

ping of God, is it not allowed by 1 Cor. xiv. 40. Let all things be done decently, and in order?

A. No; that ſcripture commands that God's inſtitutions be regularly and decently performed, but not that we invent ceremonies that are ſymbolical, to make them more decent than Chriſt left them.

Q. 4. Why is the ſecond commandment left out in all the public offices of the popiſh church?

A. Becauſe it expreſsly condemns their idolatrous images, kneeling at the ſacrament, prayers to ſaints, and all their ſuperſtitious croſſes, ſurplices, and chriſme, as ſinful.

Q. 5. Do they not clear themſelves from idolatry, by telling us they only worſhip God before, or by them, but not the images themſelves?

A. No, they do not; for the uſe of images in God's worſhip is expreſsly condemned in this commandment; and if this would excuſe the papiſts, it had alſo excuſed the Iſraelites in worſhipping the calf, Exod. xxxii. 4.——And they ſaid, Theſe be thy gods, O Iſrael, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

Q. 6. What is the firſt reaſon annexed to the ſecond commandment?

A. The firſt reaſon annexed is God's ſovereignty, *I the Lord*; which ſhews that it belongs to God only to inſtitute his own worſhip, and make it effectual; and therefore to do that in his worſhip which he never commanded, is ſinful and dangerous; Jer. vii. 31. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the ſon of Hinnom, to burn their ſons and their daughters in the fire, which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.

Q. 7. What is the ſecond reaſon annexed to the ſecond commandment?

A. The ſecond reaſon is God's propriety in us: He is our God, and we belong to him; and therefore to corrupt his worſhip, greatly aggravates our ſins; Hoſea ix. 1. Rejoice not, O Iſrael, for joy, as other people; for thou haſt gone a whoring from thy God, *&c.*

Q. 8. What is the third reaſon annexed to the ſecond commandment?

A. The jealouſy of God over his worſhip and worſhippers; ſo that this ſin of corrupting his worſhip will dreadfully incenſe his wrath, as it did, Lev. x. 1, 2. And Nadab and Abihu, the ſons of Aaron, took either of them his cenſer, and put fire thereon, and offered ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he

commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

Q. 9. What is the first instruction from the second commandment?

A. That it is an heinous sin to neglect the worship of God, in that manner he hath appointed us to worship him, as in prayer; Jer. x. 25. Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name. Hearing the word; Prov. xxviii. 9. He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

Q. 10. What is the second instruction from the second commandment?

A. That those who suffer for endeavouring to preserve the purity of God's ordinances, and nonconformity to the contrary injunctions of men, have a good warrant to bear them out in all such sufferings; Deut. iv. 2. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you.

Q. 11. What is the third instruction from the second commandment?

A. That it is highly sinful and dangerous to innovate and prescribe by human authority such symbolical rites in the worship of God, as he never appointed or allowed in his word; Matth. xv. 9. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Q. 12. What is the fourth instruction hence?

A. Hence we learn how much parents and children are obliged to worship God constantly, spiritually, and agreeably to his will revealed in his word; otherwise the jealousy of God will visit them both in the way of judgment: For as obedience entails a blessing, so disobedience entails a curse on posterity; Exod. xxxiv. 14. For thou shalt worship no other god; for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

Of the third Commandment.

Quest. 53. WHich is the third commandment?

A. *The third commandment is,* [*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his name in vain.*]

Quest. 54. What is required in the third commandment?

A. *The third commandment requireth the holy and reverend use of God's names, titles, attributes, ordinances, words, and works.*

Queſt. 55. What is forbidden in the third commandment?

A. *The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning or abuſing of any thing whereby God maketh himſelf known.*

Queſt. 56. What is the reaſon annexed to the third commandment?

A. *The reaſon annexed to the third commandment is, that however the breakers of this commandment may eſcape puniſhment from men, yet the Lord our God will not ſuffer them to eſcape his righteous judgment.*

Q. 1. How doth this commandment differ from the firſt and ſecond?

A. The firſt hath reſpect to the object of worſhip, forbidding us to worſhip any other but God. The ſecond reſpects the means of worſhip, forbidding us to worſhip God by any other means than what he hath preſcribed. But the third reſpects the manner of his worſhip, forbidding all careleſs, or profane uſe of his name, and commanding an holy reverence from us in all our ſolemn addreſſes to him, or ordinary mention of his name. Mal. i. 6. A ſon honoureth his father, and a ſervant his maſter: If then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a maſter, where is my fear? ſaith the Lord of hoſts unto you, O prieſts, that deſpiſe my name: And ye ſay, Wherein have we deſpiſed thy name?

Q. 2. What is the firſt thing eſpecially required in the third commandment?

A. It requires the moſt awful and reverential frame of our hearts in all our approaches to God; Pſalm lxxxix. 7. God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of the ſaints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. And in his worſhip; John iv. 24. God is a Spirit; and they that worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth.

Q. 3. What is the ſecond thing required in this commandment?

A. It requires truth in our witneſs-bearing, as knowing God ſeeth our hearts, and is witneſs to all that we think, or ſpeak; Zech. v. 4. I will bring it forth, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and it ſhall enter into the houſe of the thief, and into the houſe of him that ſweareth falſely by my name, *&c.*

Q. 4. What is the third thing required in this commandment?

A. That in all our appeals to God in ſecret, or doubtful matters, we be ſure that the appeal be neceſſary, awful, and true; Jer. xvii. 16. As for me, I have not haſtened from being a

paſtor to follow thee, neither have I deſired the woeful day, thou knoweſt: that which came out of my lips was right before thee. Pſalm cxxxix. 23, 24. Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts. And ſee if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlaſting.

Q. 5. What doth this commandment eſpecially forbid?

A. It forbids and condemns all profane oaths, as moſt injurious to the name of God, Matth. v. 34, 37.—Swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne, *&c.* But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatſoever is more than theſe, cometh of evil.

Q. 6. What is the danger of profane or falſe ſwearing?

A. Such are reckoned enemies to God, Pſalm cxxxix. 20. Thine enemies take thy name in vain. The curſe of God enters into ſuch families. Zech. v. 4. I will bring it forth, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and it ſhall enter into the houſe of the thief, and into the houſe of him that ſweareth falſely by my name, *&c.* And the Lord will not hold them guiltleſs.

Q. 7. What elſe is forbidden in this commandment?

A. It forbids and condemns all heedleſs, wandering, and drowzy performance of God's worſhip; Iſa. xxix. 13, 14. Wherefore the Lord ſaid, Foraſmuch as this people draw near me with their mouths, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work, and a wonder; for the wiſdom of their wiſe men ſhall periſh, and the underſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid. And 2 Kings x. 31. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Iſrael, with all his heart: for he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam, which made Iſrael to ſin.

Q. 8. What other ſin is forbidden in this command?

A. It forbids all light and irreverent uſe of the ſcriptures, eſpecially in our jeſts, or by way of ſcoffing; Jer. xvii. 15. Behold, they ſay unto me, Where is the word of the Lord? Let it come now. Jer. vi. 10.—Behold, the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach: they have no delight in it.

Q. 9. By what argument doth God enforce the third commandment on men?

A. That the breakers of this commandment ſhall ſurely be puniſhed by the Lord, either in this life, Deut. xxviii. 58, 59. If thou wilt not obſerve to do all the words of this law, that are written in this book, that thou mayeſt fear this glorious and

fearful name, the Lord thy God: Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy ſeed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and ſore ſickneſs, and of long continuance: Or in that to come, Rom. ii. 5. But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up unto thyſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: Except they repent and reform.

Q. 10. What is the firſt inſtruction from the third commandment?

A. That great and infinite is the patience of God in forbearing and provoking ſinners ſo long as he doth; Rom. ix. 22. What if God, willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction?

Q. 11. What is the ſecond inſtruction from hence?

A. That God is to be juſtified in the ſevereſt of his judgments, by which at any time he manifeſts his diſpleaſure againſt the profaneneſs of the world; Hoſea iv. 1, 2, 3. Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Iſrael: For the Lord hath a controverſy with the inhabitants of the land, becauſe there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By ſwearing, and lying, and killing, and ſtealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore ſhall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein ſhall languiſh, with the beaſts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, yea, the fiſhes of the ſea alſo ſhall be taken away.

Q. 12. What is the third inſtruction from hence?

A. That God takes ſpecial notice of, and greatly delighteth in them that fear and reverence his name; Iſa. lxvi. 5. Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word: Your brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my name's ſake, ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified; but he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed. Mal. iii. 16.—And a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

Q. 13. What is the laſt inference from hence?

A. That thoſe parents have much to anſwer for, that by their examples teach, or by their negligence encourage their children to profane God's name; Jer. v. 7. How ſhall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forſaken me, and ſworn by them that are no gods, *&c.*

Of the Sabbath.

Quest. 57. WHich is the fourth commandment?

A. *The fourth commandment is,* [*Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger which is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.*]

Quest. 58. What is required in the fourth commandment?

A. *The fourth commandment requireth the keeping holy to God, such set time as he hath appointed in his word, expressly one whole day in seven, to be an holy Sabbath unto the Lord.*

Quest. 59. Which day of the seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?

A. *From the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly Sabbath; and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian Sabbath.*

Q. 1. What special marks of honour hath God set upon this fourth commandment?

A. God hath set four peculiar marks of honour on it.

(1.) It is the largest of all the commands.

(2.) It hath a solemn *memento* prefixed to it.

(3.) It is delivered both positively and negatively, which the rest are not. And,

(4.) It is enforced with more arguments to strengthen the command on us, than any other.

Q. 2. Why will God have a Sabbath on earth?

A. God will have a Sabbath on earth, to give us therein an emblem of that eternal Sabbath in heaven, wherein his people shall be serving him, and praising him without interruption, or mixture of any other business throughout eternity; Heb. iv. 9. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

Q. 3. For what other reasons will God have a Sabbath?

A. He will have a Sabbath for the honour of his name, Isa. lviii. 13. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words. For the good of mens souls; Mark

ii. 27. And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. And in mercy to the bodies of men and beasts.

Q. 4. Is this commandment moral and perpetual, or ceremonial and temporary?

A. It is, and must needs be moral, and not ceremonial; because all the reasons that enforce it are perpetual, and the Sabbath continued when the ceremonial law ceased, and was vanished; Matth. xxiv. 20. But pray ye, that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day.

Q. 5. What day of the seven is the Christian Sabbath?

A. The first day of the week is our Sabbath, since the resurrection of Christ. This is the day which was foretold to be our Sabbath; Psalm cxviii. 24. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. The Lord hath marked it for himself, by setting his own name on it; Rev. i. 10. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. And the apostles, and primitive church, constantly set it apart to religious uses and ends; Acts xx. 7. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, *&c.* 1 Cor xvi. 2. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Q. 6. When doth the Christian Sabbath begin?

A. It appears that this day is not to be reckoned from evening to evening, but from morning to morning; because the Christian Sabbath must begin when the Jewish Sabbath ended, but that ended towards the morning, Matth. xxviii. 1. In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalen, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.

Q. 7. What is the ground of changing the day?

A. The solemn commemoration of our redemption by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is the ground of translating the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week; Psalm cxviii. 24. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice, and be glad in it. Mark xvi. 9. Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

Q. 8. Is it the whole day, or only some hours of the day, that are set apart for God?

A. Not a part, but the whole day is the Lord's; and it is as dangerous to halve it with God in point of time, as it was for Ananias and Sapphira to halve their dedicated goods, and bring

in but a part. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day, is the command.

Q. 9. Is there any other day holy, beſides this day?

A. No day but this is holy by inſtitution of the Lord; yet days of humiliation and thankſgiving may be lawfully ſet apart by men on a call of providence; but popiſh holy days are not warrantable, nor to be obſerved; Gal. iv. 10. Ye obſerve days, and months, and times, and years.

Q. 10. But ſeeing every day ſhould be a Sabbath to a Chriſtian, what needs any other ſet time?

A. Though Chriſtians muſt walk every day with God, yet every day cannot be a Sabbath, becauſe God calls us to other duties on thoſe days, but will have this to be a ſolemn and entire day to himſelf.

Q. 11. But if a man ſcruple the change of the Sabbath, may he not keep both days weekly?

A. No; for then, by doing more than God requires, he breaks a plain command, Six days ſhalt thou labour.

Q. 12. At what time ſhould Chriſtians be up, and at their duties, on the Lord's day?

A. As early in the morning as their ſtrength will permit, to prepare by private for public duties; yet the public are not to be entrenched on by private duties; Acts x. 33.—Now therefore are we all here preſent before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

Of the Sabbath.

Queſt. 60. HOW is the Sabbath to be ſanctified?

A. *The Sabbath is to be ſanctified by an holy reſting all that day, even from ſuch worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, and ſpending the whole time in the public and private exerciſes of God's worſhip, except ſo much as is to be taken up in the works of neceſſity and mercy.*

Queſt. 61. What are the ſins forbidden in the fourth commandment?

A. *The fourth commandment forbiddeth the omiſſion or careleſs performance of the duties required, and the profaning the day by idleneſs, or doing that which is in itſelf ſinful, or by unneceſſary thoughts, words, or works, about our wordly employments or recreations.*

Queſt. 62. What are the reaſons annexed to the fourth commandment?

A. *The reaſons annexed to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us ſix days of the week for our own employment, his*

challenging a ſpecial propriety in the ſeventh, his own example, and his bleſſing the Sabbath-day.

Q. 1. What is the reſt which God requires on the Sabbath?

A. It is not a mere natural or civil, but an holy reſt, reſembling the reſt in heaven, wherein the mind is moſt active and buſy in the work of God, though the body be at reſt, and the ſpirit not wearied with its work; Rev. iv. 8. And the four beaſts had each of them ſix wings about him, and they were full of eyes within, and they reſt not day and night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

Q. 2. May not any works of our civil calling be ordinarily done on that day?

A. No; it is ſinful to put our hands ordinarily to our callings on that day, and God uſually puniſhes it. Neh. xiii. 15, 16, 17, 18. In thoſe days ſaw I in Judah ſome treading wine-preſſes on the Sabbath, and bringing up ſheaves, and lading aſſes, as alſo wine-grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens which they brought into Jeruſalem on the Sabbath-day; and I teſtified againſt them in the day wherein they ſold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre alſo therein, which brought fiſh, and all manner of ware, and ſold on the Sabbath, unto the children of Judah, and in Jeruſalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and ſaid unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath-day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? Yet ye bring more wrath upon Iſrael by profaning the Sabbath.

Q. 3. May we not refreſh our bodies by recreations, or our minds by thoughts of earthly buſineſs, or diſcourſes, on that day?

A. Recreations of the body, which are lawful on other days, are ſinful on this day; and all the recreations of the mind allowed on this day, are ſpiritual and heavenly; Iſa. lviii. 13, 14. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleaſure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and ſhalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleaſure, nor ſpeaking thine own words; then ſhalt thou delight thyſelf in the Lord, and I will cauſe thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.

Q. 4. What works may lawfully be done on that day?

A. Chriſt's example warrants works of neceſſity, and works of mercy, but no other; Matth. xii. 3, 4. But he ſaid unto them, have ye not read what David did, when he was an hun-

gred, and they that were with him, How he entered into the houſe of God, and did eat the ſhew-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the prieſts. And ver. 7. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice, *&c.*

Q. 5. What are the holy duties of the Sabbath?

A. The public worſhip of God; in reading, and hearing the word preached. Iſa. lxvi. 23. And it ſhall come to paſs, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, ſhall all fleſh come to worſhip before me, ſaith the Lord. Luke iv. 16.——And as his cuſtom was, he went into the ſynagogue on the Sabbath-day, and ſtood up for to read. And prayer; Acts xvi. 13, 14. And on the Sabbath-day we went out of the city by a river ſide, where prayer was wont to be made, *&c.* And receiving the Sacrament; Acts xx. 7. And upon the firſt day of the week, when the diſciples came together to break bread, Paul preached, *&c.*

Q. 6. Are private duties in our families required, as well as public, on the Sabbath?

A. Yes; it is not enough to ſanctify the Sabbath in public ordinances, but God requires it to be ſanctified in family, and private duties; Lev. xxiii. 3.——But the ſeventh day is the Sabbath of reſt, and holy convocation; ye ſhall do no work therein: it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.

Q. 7. With what frame of Spirit are all Sabbath duties, both public and private, to be performed?

A. They are to be performed with ſpiritual delight; Iſa. lviii. 13. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleaſure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, *&c.* And all grudging at, and wearineſs of ſpiritual exerciſes, is a ſin forbidden; Mal. i. 13. Ye ſaid alſo, behold what a wearineſs is it, and ye have ſnuffed at it, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the ſick; thus ye brought an offering: ſhould I accept this of your hand? ſaith the Lord. Amos viii. 5. When will the new moon be gone, that we may ſell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may ſet forth wheat? *&c.*

Q. 8. What is the firſt reaſon annexed to this command?

A. The firſt reaſon is the ſufficient, and large allowance of time God hath given us for our civil callings, and earthly buſineſs. Six days in the week is a large allowance.

Q. 9. What is the ſecond reaſon annexed to this fourth command?

A. The ſecond reaſon is God's ſanctifying and ſeparating this

ay by a ſpecial command and inſtitution for his ſervice; ſo that to profane this time, is to ſin againſt an expreſs divine command.

Q. 10. What is the third reaſon annexed to this command?

A. The third reaſon is God's own example, who reſted the ſeventh day from all his works, and bleſſed this day, by virtue of which bleſſing we are encouraged to ſanctify it.

Q. 11. Is it not enough to ſanctify this day in our own perſons?

A. No; if God hath put any under our authority, their profaning the Sabbath will become our ſin, though we be never ſo ſtrict in the obſervation of it ourſelves.

Q. 12. May we continue our civil employments to the laſt moment of our common time?

A. Except neceſſity or mercy urge us, we ought to break off before, and allow ſome time to prepare for the Sabbath, Luke xxiii. 54. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.

Q. 13. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That we have all great cauſe to be humbled for our Sabbath tranſgreſſions, either in our unpreparedneſs for it, our want of delight and ſpirituality in it, or the due government of our families as God requires.

Q. 14. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. That Chriſtians on the Sabbath-day have a fair occaſion and help to realize to themſelves the heavenly ſtate, in which they are to live abſtract from the world, and God is to be all in all to them.

Of the fifth Commandment.

Queſt. 63. WHich is the fifth commandment?

A. *The fifth commandment is,* [*Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*]

Queſt. 64. What is required in the fifth commandment?

A. *The fifth commandment requireth the preſerving the honour, and performing the duties belonging to every one in their ſeveral places and relations, as ſuperiors, inferiors, or equals.*

Queſt. 65. What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?

A. *The fifth commandment forbiddeth the neglecting of, or doing any thing againſt the honour and duty which belongeth to every one in their ſeveral places and relations.*

Queſt. 66. What is the reaſon annexed to the fifth commandment?

A. *The reaſon annexed to the fifth commandment is, a promiſe*

of long life and proſperity (as far as it ſhall ſerve for God's glory and their own good) to all ſuch as keep this commandment.

Q. 1. What relatives are directly and more eſpecially concerned in this fifth commandment?

A. All ſuperiors and inferiors are concerned in it; eſpecially, (1.) Political fathers, and their children; that is, kings and ſubjects; Mark xi. 10. Bleſſed be the kingdom of our father David, *&c.* (2.) Spiritual fathers, and their children; that is, miniſters, and their people; 1 Cor. iv. 15. For though you have ten thouſand inſtructors in Chriſt, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Chriſt Jeſus I have begotten you through the goſpel. (3.) Natural parents, and their children; Eph. vi. 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord. (4.) All civil ſuperiors and inferiors, as huſbands and wives, maſters and ſervants; Eph. v. 22. Wives, ſubmit yourſelves unto your own huſbands, as unto the Lord. And Eph. vi. 5. Servants, be obedient to them that are your maſters according to the fleſh, *&c.*

Q. 2. What is the duty of political fathers, or magiſtrates, to their political children, or ſubjects?

A. It is to rule and govern the people over whom God hath ſet them with wiſdom; 2 Chron. i. 10. Give me now wiſdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people. Juſtice; 2 Chron. xix. 5, 6, 7. And he ſet judges in the land, throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city. And he ſaid to the judges, take heed what ye do; for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgement. Wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed, and do it, *&c.* And piety; 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.——He that ruleth over men muſt be juſt, ruling in the fear of God. Carefully providing for their ſouls in every place of their dominion; 2 Chron. xvii. 9. And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people. And for their common outward peace and ſafety; 2 Chron. xvii. 12. And Jehoſhaphat waxed great exceedingly, and he built in Judah caſtles and cities of ſtore.

Q. 3. What are the duties of ſubjects to their rulers?

A. It is to pray for them; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. I exhort therefore, that firſt of all ſupplications, prayers, interceſſions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: For kings, and for all that are in authority, *&c.* To honour them; 1 Pet. ii. 17.——Fear God, honour the king. To obey their juſt laws; Rom. xiii. 1. Let every ſoul be ſubject unto the higher powers, *&c.* And to pay them the tribute that is due to them; Rom. xiii. 7.

Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, cuſtom to whom cuſtom, *&c.*

Q. 4. What are the duties of miniſters to their people?

A. Their duty is, (1.) To feed their flock conſtantly with wholeſome food; 2 Tim. iv. 2. Preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon; rebuke, reprove, exhort, with all long-ſuffering and doctrine. (2.) To be full of bowels of tender affection to them; 1 Theſſ ii. 7, 8. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurſe cheriſheth her children: So being affectionately deſirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the goſpel of God only, but alſo our own ſouls, becauſe ye were dear unto us. (3.) To pray for them, Eph. i. 15, 16. Wherefore I alſo, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jeſus, and love unto all the ſaints, ceaſe not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers. (4.) To watch over them; 1 Pet. v. 2. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the overſight thereof, not by conſtraint, but willingly, *&c.* And, (5.) To walk as an example of godlineſs before them; Tit. ii. 7. In all things ſhewing thyſelf a pattern of good works, *&c.* All which duties require their reſidence among them; 1 Pet. v. 2. Feed the flock of God which is among you, *&c.*

Q. 5. What are the people's duties towards their miniſters?

A. Their duty is, (1.) To eſteem and love them dearly for their work's ſake; 1 Theſſ. v. 12, 13. And we beſeech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you; and to eſteem them very highly in love for their work's ſake. (2.) To attend on the word preached by them, as the word of God: 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. For this cauſe alſo thank we God without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God. (3.) To pray for them, and the ſucceſs of their labours; Heb. xiii. 18. Pray for us, *&c.* (4.) Not to receive light and malicious reports againſt them; 1 Tim. v. 19. Againſt an elder receive not an accuſation, but before two or three witneſſes. (5.) To make a competent, and comfortable proviſion for them; Gal. vi. 6. Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.

Q. 6. What are the duties of natural parents to their children?

A. It is their duty, (1.) To be tenderly, but not fondly affectionate to, and tender over them; Iſa. xlix. 15. Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſ-

ſion on the ſon of her womb? (2.) To educate them for God; Eph. vi. 4. And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (3.) To reſtrain their ſins by correction; Prov. xxix. 15. The rod and reproof give wiſdom, but a child left to himſelf, bringeth his mother to ſhame. (4.) To provide for their livelihood; 1 Tim. v. 8. But if any provide not for his own, and eſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an infidel. (5.) To pray daily for them; Job i. 5. And it was ſo, when the days of their feaſting were gone about, that Job ſent and ſanctified them, and roſe up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job ſaid, It may be that my ſons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts: Thus did Job continually. (6.) To encourage them with endearing language in the way of godlineſs; Prov. xxxi. 1, 2, 3. The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. What, my ſon? and what the ſon of my womb? and what the ſon of my vows? Give not thy ſtrength unto women, nor thy ways to that which deſtroyeth kings.

Q. 7. What are the duties of children to parents?

A. Their duty is, (1.) To obey them only in the Lord; Eph. vi. 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord. (2.) To reverence and honour them; Lev. xix. 3. Ye ſhall fear every man his mother and his father, *&c.* (3.) To ſubmit to their reproofs and corrections; Heb. xii. 9. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our fleſh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence. (4.) To provide for them, if they be poor and needy, and we have ability; Gen. xlvii. 12. And Joſeph nouriſhed his father and his brethren, and all his father's houſhold, with bread, according to their families.

Q. 8. What ſhall children do, when parents abuſe their authority, by forbidding duty, or commanding ſin?

A. In ſuch caſes children are to obey God, rather than their parents; Acts iv. 19. But Peter and John anſwered, and ſaid unto them, whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye. But yet to manage their refuſals of obedience with all meekneſs and humility.

Q. 9. What is the firſt duty of huſbands to their wives?

A. The firſt duty, on which all other duties depend, is cohabitation with them; 1 Pet. iii. 7. Likewiſe ye huſbands, dwell with them, according to knowledge, *&c.* And nothing can make this duty void, but a lawful divorce for adultery;

Matth. v. 31, 32.—But I ſay unto you, That whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, ſaving for the cauſe of fornication, cauſeth her to commit adultery, *&c.*

Q. 10. What is the huſband's ſecond duty to his wife?

A. True and hearty love to ſoul and body; Eph. v. 25. Huſbands, love your wives, even as Chriſt alſo loved the church, and gave himſelf for it. Evidencing itſelf in careful proviſion for them; 1 Cor. vii. 33. But he that is married, careth for the things of the world, how he may pleaſe his wife. But eſpecially to their ſouls, in winning them to Chriſt; 1 Cor. vii. 16.—Or, how knoweſt thou, O man, whether thou ſhalt ſave thy wife? And building them up in Chriſt; 1 Pet. iii. 7. Likewiſe ye huſbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker veſſel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered.

Q. 11. What are the duties of wives to their huſbands?

A. It is their duty, (1.) To be in ſubjection to their own husbands; Eph. v. 22, 23. Wives, ſubmit yourſelves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord: For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Chriſt is the head of the church. (2.) To reverence them; Eph. v. 33.—And the wife ſee that ſhe reverence her husband. (3.) To expreſs their reverence in ſuitable words and actions; 1 Pet. iii. 6. Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord, *&c.* (4.) To be faithful to them; Prov. xxxi. 12. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. (5.) To adorn their relation with meekneſs, and quietneſs of ſpirit; 1 Pet. iii. 4. But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which is in the ſight of God of great price.

Q. 12. What are the duties of ſervants to their maſters?

A. It is their duty, (1.) To be faithful in all things committed to their charge; Tit. ii. 10. Not purloining, but ſhewing all good fidelity, *&c.* (2.) To honour them in all reſpectful words and carriages; 1 Tim. vi. 1. Let as many ſervants as are under the yoke, count their own maſters worthy of all honour, *&c.* (5.) To bear patiently their rebukes; 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19. Servants, be ſubject to your maſters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conſcience toward God endure grief, ſuffering wrongfully.

Q. 13. What is the firſt duty of maſters to their ſervants?

A. Their firſt duty is to rule over them with gentleneſs, and

not with terror and rigour; Eph. vi. 9. And ye maſters, do the ſame things unto them, forbearing threatening: Knowing that your Maſter alſo is in heaven, neither is there reſpect of perſons with him.

Q. 14. What is the ſecond duty of maſters to their ſervants?

A. To pay them their wages fully, and without delay; Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. Thou ſhalt not oppreſs an hired ſervant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy ſtrangers that are in thy land within thy gates. At his day thou ſhalt give him his hire, neither ſhall the ſun go down upon it, for he is poor, and ſetteth his heart upon it; leſt he cry againſt thee unto the Lord, and it be ſin unto thee. And to provide food for them convenient; Prov. xxvii. 27. And thou ſhalt have goats-milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy houſhold, and for maintenance for thy maidens.

Q. 15. What is the third duty of maſters to their ſervants?

A. The third and principal duty is, to engage them as much as in them lies, to the ways of God, and duties of religion, as Abraham did; Gen. xviii. 19. For I know him, that he will command his children, and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord, *&c.* And Joſhua, Joſh. xxiv. 15.—But as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.

Of the ſixth Commandment.

Queſt. 67. WHich is the ſixth commandment?

A. *The ſixth commandment is,* [*Thou ſhalt not kill.*]

Queſt. 68. What is required in the ſixth commandment?

A. *The ſixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavours to preſerve our own life, and the life of others.*

Queſt. 69. What is forbidden in the ſixth commandment?

A. *The ſixth commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbour unjuſtly, or whatſoever tendeth thereunto.*

Q. 1. What is the natural order of theſe commandments in the ſecond table?

A. In theſe commands God begins with the neareſt concern of man, which is life; Job ii. 4.—Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life. Next to that, his command guards his neareſt relative, from whom the beſt outward comfort is to riſe, his wife; Mark x. 8. And they twain ſhall be one fleſh, *&c.* After that his good name, which is very precious to him; Eccl. vii. 1. A good name is better than precious ointment. And then his goods, which ſupport his life;

Iſa. iii. 1. For behold, the Lord, the Lord of hoſts, doth take away from Jeruſalem, and from Judah, the ſtay and the ſtaff, the whole ſtay of bread, and the whole ſtay of water.

Q. 2. How far doth this commandment extend itſelf?

A. It prohibits all cruelty, and commands all help, care, and pity, ſo far as mens hearts and hands can go, for the relief and preſervation of others; Pſalm cxix. 96.—But thy commandment is exceeding broad.

Q. 3. Doth this command reſpect only the outward action, or alſo the inward paſſion of the ſoul?

A. It reſpects and bridles the inward paſſion of the ſoul, as well as outward actions; as hatred, 1 John iii. 15. Whoſoever hateth his brother, is a murderer, *&c.* And cauſeleſs anger; Matth. v. 22. But I ſay unto you, that whoſoever is angry with his brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of the judgment, *&c.*

Q. 4. Doth this command only reſpect the lives of others?

A. No; it primarily reſpects our own lives, and forbids us all things that tend to the ſhortening and ruin of them; Eph. v. 29. For no man ever yet hated his own fleſh, but nouriſheth and cheriſheth it, even as the Lord doth the church.

Q. 5. How many ways may men ſin againſt this command, with reſpect to their own lives?

A. A man ſinneth againſt his own life, not only by deſtroying himſelf, as the jailor would have done; Acts xvi. 27. And the keeper of the priſon awaking out of his ſleep, and ſeeing the priſon-doors open, he drew out his ſword, and would have killed himſelf, ſuppoſing that the priſoners had been fled; but by refuſing food or phyſic to preſerve life, or macerating our bodies with exceſſive ſorrows; 2 Cor. vii. 10.——But the ſorrow of the world worketh death. Or envy at others felicity; Prov. xiv. 30.—But envy, the rottenneſs of the bones.

Q. 6. How are men guilty of murder with reſpect to others?

A. Murder, with reſpect to others, may be either with relation to their bodies; Numb. xxxv. 30. Whoſo killeth any perſon, the murderer ſhall be put to death, *&c.* Or to their ſouls, which is the moſt heinous murder in the world; Ezek. iii. 18. When I ſay unto the wicked, Thou ſhalt ſurely die, and thou giveſt him not warning, nor ſpeakeſt to warn the wicked from his wicked way to ſave his life: the ſame wicked man ſhall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

Q. 7. Is all deſtruction of another's life murder in the account of God?

A. No; it is not, if the life of a perſon be taken away in the courſe of juſtice; Gen. ix. 6. Whoſo ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed. Or, in a juſt and neceſſary war; Judges v. 23. Curſe ye Meroz, (ſaid the angel of the Lord) curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty. Or by pure accident; Deut. xix. 5. As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a ſtroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the head ſlippeth from the helve, and lighteth upon his neighbour that he die, he ſhall flee unto one of thoſe cities, and live. Or in ſelf-defence; Exod. xxii. 2. If a thief be found breaking up, and be ſmitten that he die, there ſhall no blood be ſhed for him.

Q. 8. Is there no other way of breaking this commandment?

A. Yes, there is: Innocents may be murdered under the forms and ſolemnities both of juſtice and religion. So Naboth was murdered by Jezebel; 1 Kings xxi. 12, 13. They proclaimed a faſt, and ſet Naboth on high among the people. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and ſat before him: And the men of Belial witneſſed againſt him, even againſt Naboth, in the preſence of the people, ſaying, Naboth did blaſpheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and ſtoned him with ſtones that he died. And the martyrs by bloody Papiſts. And this ſtrongly proves a day of judgment; Eccl. iii. 16, 17. And moreover, I ſaw under the ſun the place of judgment, that wickedneſs was there, and the place of righteouſneſs, that iniquity was there. I ſaid in mine heart, God ſhall judge the righteous and the wicked: For there is a time there for every purpoſe, and for every work.

Q. 9. Are duels forbidden in this commandment?

A. Yes, they are; for whatever point of honour be touched, or whatever provocation be given, we are not to be our own avengers; Rom. xii. 19. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourſelves, *&c.*

Q. 10. What is the firſt inference hence?

A. That we have great cauſe to bleſs God for his protecting law, and for human laws grounded upon his law for the protection of our lives; Rom. xiii. 4.——For he is the miniſter of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond inference hence?

A. That all that are guilty of this ſin, have great cauſe to be humbled and afflicted: For it is a crying ſin, Gen. iv. 10.——

The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. Yet not to despair of mercy upon true repentance. Manasseh shed innocent blood, and yet was pardoned, upon repentance; 2 Kings xxi. 16. Moreover, Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another, *&c.*

Q. 12. What is the third inference hence?

A. Let all men watch against pride, passion, malice, and revenge, the sin of the heart, from which this horrid sin proceeds; Matth. xv. 18, 19.—For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, *&c.*

Of the seventh Commandment.

Quest. 70. WHich is the seventh commandment?

A. *The seventh commandment is,* [*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

Quest. 71. What is required in the seventh commandment?

A. *The seventh commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbour's chastity in heart, speech, and behaviour.*

Quest. 72. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A. *The seventh commandment forbiddeth all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions.*

Q. 1. What is the duty required in this commandment?

A. The first duty required in this commandment is, the preservation of our own chastity in heart, lips, and life; 1 Thess. iv. 3, 4. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication. That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour. And Eph. iv. 29. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, *&c.*

Q. 2. Why must we preserve our own chastity?

A. Because our bodies are, or ought to be the temples of the holy Ghost; 1 Cor. vi. 15, 19. Know ye not, that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? And it is the express charge of God that they be kept pure and clean; 1 Thess. iv. 3, 4. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication. That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.

Q. 3. What is the ſecond reaſon?

A. The ſecond reaſon is, becauſe of the evil of it to ourſelves: As, (1.) It injures the body; 1 Cor. vi. 18. He that committeth fornication, ſinneth againſt his own body. (2.) It levels us with the Heathen; Eph. iv. 17, 19. This I ſay therefore, and teſtify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk,—who being paſt feeling, have given themſelves over unto laſciviouſneſs, to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs. (3.) Diſhonours our names; Prov. vi. 32, 33. But whoſo committeth adultery with a woman,—a wound and diſhonour ſhall he get, *&c.* (4.) Scatters our eſtates; Prov. v. 10. Leſt ſtrangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the houſe of ſtrangers. (5.) Deſtroyeth the ſoul; Prov. vi. 32.—He that doth it, deſtroyeth his own ſoul.

Q. 4. What age is moſt incident to this ſin?

A. The youthful age is moſt apt to be drawn into this ſin; Prov. vii. 7. And behold among the ſimple ones, I diſcerned among the youths, a young man void of underſtanding. And 2 Tim. ii. 22. Flee alſo youthful luſts, *&c.*

Q. 5. How far doth this command extend itſelf?

A. It extends itſelf to the heart, mind, and fancy, as well as to the body, and external actions; Matth. v. 28. But I ſay unto you, that whoſoever looketh on a woman, to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Q. 6. What are the uſual inducements to this ſin?

A. The uſual inducements to this ſin are, (1.) Idleneſs and fulneſs of the creatures; Ezek. xvi. 49, 50. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy ſiſter Sodom; pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her, and in her daughters, *&c.* (2.) Wanton geſtures; Iſa. iii. 16. Moreover, the Lord ſaith, Becauſe the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with ſtretched forth necks, and wanton eyes, walking, and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet. (3.) Filthy communication; Eph. v. 4. Neither filthineſs, nor fooliſh talking, nor jeſting, which are not convenient, *&c.*

Q. 7. What is the firſt remedy againſt this ſin?

A. The firſt remedy, and the moſt effectual, is, to get the Spirit of God within us, to ſanctify and rule us; Gal. v. 16. ——Walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh.

Q. 8. What is the ſecond remedy?

A. The keeping of a ſtrict watch over the heart; Prov. iv. 23. Keep thy heart with all diligence, *&c.* And over the ex-

ternal ſenſes; Job xxxi. 1. I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then ſhould I think upon a maid?

Q. 9. What is the third remedy againſt it?

A. Deep and ſerious conſideration of the danger of this ſin, and what God threatens againſt adulterers; Heb. xiii. 4.—— Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.—Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate,—ſhall inherit the kingdom of God. And how he deſcribes them, Prov. xxii. 14. The mouth of a ſtrange woman is a deep pit; he that is abhorred of the Lord ſhall fall therein.

Q. 10. What is the fourth remedy againſt it?

A. Prayer; Pſalm cxix. 37. Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, *&c.* And, to evidence our ſincerity in prayer, we muſt ſtudy to ſhun all occaſions of this ſin; Pſalm xviii. 23. I was alſo upright before him; and I kept myſelf from mine iniquity.

Q. 11. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. What cauſe thoſe have to bleſs God, that have been kept from this ſin; though the beſt ought to be humbled for their heart-pollutions.

Q. 12. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. Let it warn parents to do what in them lies to prevent the ruin of their children by this ſin, (1.) By filling their heads and hands with lawful buſineſs. (2) By ſerious admonitions and prayers for them. (3.) By keeping them from vain and tempting company. (4.) By diſpoſing them ſeaſonably in ſuitable marriage.

Q. 13. What is the third inference from hence?

A. Let thoſe that are defiled with this ſin repent, ſeriouſly of it, as David did; Pſalm li. 8. Make me to hear joy and gladneſs, that the bones which thou haſt broken may rejoice. And apply the blood of Chriſt by faith; for in ſo doing, it may be pardoned; 1 Cor. vi. 11. And ſuch were ſome of you: but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by the Spirit of our God.

Of the eighth Commandment.

Queſt. 73. WHich is the eighth commandment?

A. *The eighth commandment is,* [*Thou ſhalt not ſteal.*]

Queſt. 74. What is required in the eighth commandment?

A. *The eighth commandment requireth the lawful procuring*

and furthering the wealth, and outward eſtate of ourſelves and others.

Queſt. 75. What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?

A. *The eighth commandment forbiddeth whatſoever doth, or may unjuſtly hinder our own, or our neighbour's wealth, or outward eſtate.*

Q. 1. What is preſuppoſed in this commandment?

A. It preſuppoſeth that God hath given every man a propriety in his eſtate, and that no man's goods are common to others, except by his conſent in times and caſes extraordinary; Acts iv. 44. And all that believed were together, and had all things common.

Q. 2. What is required in this commandment?

A. It requires of every man diligence in a lawful calling, to get and preſerve an eſtate for his own and others good; Prov. xiii. 11. He that gathereth by labour, ſhall increaſe. Eph. iv. 28.——But rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Q. 3. What elſe is required in this commandment?

A. It requires us not only to get and keep the things of the world in a lawful manner, but to diſtribute and communicate them to thoſe that are in want, and not caſt them into temptations of ſin, or inevitable ruin; Iſa. lviii. 10. And if thou draw out thy ſoul to the hungry, and ſatisfy the afflicted ſoul: Then ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy darkneſs be as the noon-day; 1 John iii. 17. But whoſo hath this world's good, and ſeeth his brother have need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

Q. 4. What elſe is required in this commandment?

A. It requires in every man a public ſpirit to procure and promote the good and proſperity of others; 1 Cor. x. 24. Let no man ſeek his own, but every man another's wealth.

Q. 5. What elſe is required in this command?

A. It requires reſtitution of all goods unjuſtly gotten, or taken from others; Lev. vi. 4. Then it ſhall be, becauſe he hath ſinned, and is guilty, that he ſhall reſtore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, *&c.* And the reſtoring of pawns and pledges, when they are due; Ezek. xviii. 7. And hath not oppreſſed any, but hath reſtored to the debtor his pledge, *&c.* Or things loſt, if we can diſcover the true owners.

Q. 6. What is the firſt ſin forbidden in this command?

A. It forbids all cozening and cheating of others in our dealings, and civil commerce with them; 1 Theſſ. iv. 6. That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter, &c. Prov. xxvi. 28. A lying tongue hateth thoſe that are afflicted by it, and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

Q. 7. What is the ſecond thing forbidden in this command?

A. It forbids all exaction and oppreſſion of our neighbour, by going beyond them, or working on their neceſſities, or detaining their dues; Lev. xxv. 14. And if thou ſell ought unto thy neighbour, or buyeſt ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye ſhall not oppreſs one another; Prov. xxiv. 28, 29. Be not a witneſs againſt thy neighbour without cauſe: And deceive not with thy lips. Say not, I will do ſo to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

Q. 8. What is the third thing forbidden in this command?

A. It forbids all unlawful weights and meaſures, which is no better than theft in God's account; Micah vi. 10, 11. Are there yet the treaſures of wickedneſs in the houſe of the wicked, and the ſcant meaſure that is abominable? Shall I count them pure with the wicked balances, and with the bag of deceitful weights?

Q. 9. What is the fourth ſin forbidden in this command?

A. It forbids all family frauds by children; Prov. xxviii. 24. Whoſo robbeth his father or his mother, and ſaith, it is no tranſgreſſion, the ſame is the companion of a deſtroyer. Or ſervants; Tit. ii. 9, 10. Exhort ſervants to be obedient unto their own maſters;—not purloining, but ſhewing all good fidelity, &c.

Q. 10. What is the fifth thing forbidden in this command?

A. It forbids all tempting of, or encouraging others to defraud thoſe who have any truſt committed to them; Pſalm l. 18. When thou ſaweſt a thief, then thou conſenteſt with him. Prov. xxix. 24. Whoſo is partner with a thief, hateth his own ſoul, &c.

Q. 11. What is the ſixth thing forbidden in this command?

A. It forbids the taking away of another's goods by open robbery by ſea or land; Job v. 5.—And the robber ſwalloweth up their ſubſtance. Or clandeſtinely and privately; 1 Pet. iv. 15. But let none of you ſuffer as a murderer, or as a thief, &c.

Q. 12. What is the danger of this ſin?

A. It brings mens ſouls, bodies, and eſtates, under the curſe of God; Zech. v. 3, 4. Then ſaid he unto me, This is the curſe that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: For

every one that ſtealeth ſhall be cut off, as on this ſide, according to it:—I will bring it forth, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and it ſhall enter into the houſe of the thief.

Q. 13. What is the firſt inſtruction hence?

A. Let all that are guilty of this ſin repent, and reſtore, as they expect mercy from God; Eph. iv. 28. Let him that ſtole, ſteal no more, *&c.* Luke xix. 8. And Zacheus ſtood, and ſaid unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken away any thing from any man by falſe accuſations, I reſtore him fourfold.

Q. 14. What is the laſt inference from hence?

A. To excite all, to whom God hath given a competency of the things of the world, that they bleſs God for keeping them from the temptations of this ſin; Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with food convenient for me: Leſt I be full, and deny thee, and ſay, who is the Lord? Or leſt I be poor, and ſteal, and take the name of my God in vain.

Of the ninth Commandment.

Queſt. 76. WHich is the ninth commandment?

A. *The ninth commandment is,* [*Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour.*]

Queſt. 77. What is required in the ninth commandment?

A. *The ninth commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own and our neighbour's good name, eſpecially in witneſs-bearing.*

Queſt. 78. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A. *The ninth commandment forbiddeth whatſoever is prejudicial to truth, or injurious to our own or our neighbour's good name.*

Q. 1. What is the general ſcope and aim of the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth command aims chiefly at the preſervation and promoting of truth amongſt men; Zech. viii. 16.—Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour, *&c.* This being of indiſpenſible neceſſity to the ſubſiſtence and welfare of human ſociety; Eph. iv. 25. Wherefore putting away lying, ſpeak every man truth with his neighbour, for we are members one of another.

Q. 2. What is the firſt thing required particularly in this command?

A. This command requires every man to take care of preſerving his own good name, by ordering his converſation in univerſal integrity; 1 Pet. iii. 15, 16. But ſanctify the Lord God

in your hearts, and be ready always to give an anſwer to every man that aſketh you a reaſon of the hope that is in you, with meekneſs and fear; having a good conſcience; that whereas they ſpeak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be aſhamed that falſely accuſe your good converſation in Chriſt.

Q. 3. What is the ſecond thing required in this command?

A. It requires all due care to preſerve the good name and honour of other men, as well as our own; for Chriſtians are not to be of narrow and private ſpirits, which centre only in their own intereſts and concernment; Phil. ii. 4. Look not every man on his own things; but every man alſo on the things of others.

Q. 4. How are we to preſerve the good names of others?

A. We are to preſerve the good names of others by an inward eſteem of all the good that is in them; Phil. ii. 3.—In lowlineſs of mind let each eſteem others better than themſelves. And manifeſting our inward eſteem of them by a wiſe and ſeaſonable expreſſion thereof for their encouragement in the ways of godlineſs; Rom. i. 8. Firſt, I thank my God through Jeſus Chriſt for you all, that your faith is ſpoken of throughout the whole world.

Q. 5. How elſe are we to defend other mens names?

A. By our readineſs to receive with joy the reports of that good that is in them; 3 John 3. For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and teſtified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkeſt in the truth. And diſcountenancing all reproaches maliciouſly vented againſt them; Pſalm xv. 3.—Nor taketh up a reproach againſt his neighbour.

Q. 6. But what if the report be evidently true?

A. In that caſe we are to grieve for their miſcarriages, as the effect and fruit of our love to their ſouls; 2 Cor. ii. 4. For out of much affliction and anguiſh of heart, I wrote unto you with many tears, not that ye ſhould be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. And to diſcharge our duties privately and faithfully, in order to their recovery; Matth. xviii. 15, 16, 17. Moreover, if thy brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone, *&c.* Winking at, and concealing in love, their leſſer and common infirmities; 1 Pet. iv. 8. And above all things have fervent charity among yourſelves: For charity ſhall cover the multitude of ſins.

Q. 7. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A. It forbids us to injure others, by raiſing or receiving lies,

and false reports, which are highly injurious to their good names; Col. iii. 9. Lie not one to another, *&c.*

Q. 8. What else is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A. It especially forbids perjury, or false swearing, whereby not only the names, but estates and lives of the innocent are injured and ruined; Psalm xxxv. 11. False witnesses did rise up. They laid to my charge things that I knew not; Prov. xix. 5. A false witness shall not be unpunished: And he that speaketh lies shall not escape. A sin which God will punish; Mal. iii. 5. And I will come near to you to judgment, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, *&c.*

Q. 9. What else is forbidden in this commandment?

A. It forbids all whispering and backbiting of others secretly; 2 Cor. xii. 20.—Lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, *&c.* And all tale-carrying from one to another, to our neighbour's injury; Lev. xix. 16. Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among the people, *&c.* And 1 Tim. v. 13.—And not only idle, but tatlers also, and busy-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.

Q. 10. What else doth the ninth commandment forbid?

A. It forbids all rash and unwarrantable judging of other men's hearts and final estates, which is usually accompanied with ignorance of our own; Matth. vii. 1, 3. Judge not, that ye be not judged. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Q. 11. What else is forbidden in this commandment?

A. It forbids the eclipsing of the true worth and honour of others, by a proud exalting of ourselves; 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5. Charity envieth not, charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, *&c.* Or by crying up one to the disparagement of another good man; 1 Cor. iii. 4, 5. For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal? *&c.*

Q. 12. What is the first inference from hence?

A. That the best Christians have cause to be humbled for the sins of the tongue, whereby God is dishonoured, and others are injured; James iii. 2. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. And verse 5, 6. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things: behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue amongst our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

Q. 13. What is the second inference from hence?

A. It is our great concernment to walk with that piety and justice towards God and men, as to cut off all just occasions of reproach from our names; 2 Cor. xi. 12. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasions, &c. 1 Tim. v. 14. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

Q. 14. What is the third inference from this commandment?

A. To bless God that our names are kept sweet and honourable in the world among good men; 3 John 12. Demetrius hath a good report of all men, &c. Or if we be reproached, it is by none but wicked men, and that for our duty to God; Dan. vi. 5. Then said these men, we shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

Of the tenth Commandment.

Quest. 79. WHich is the tenth commandment?

A. *The tenth commandment is,* [*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*]

Quest. 80. What is required in the tenth commandment?

A. *The tenth commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit towards our neighbour, and all that is his.*

Quest. 81. What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

A. *The tenth commandment forbiddeth all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbour, and all inordinate motions and affections to any thing that is his.*

Q. 1. What is the principal scope and aim of the tenth commandment?

A. It is to prevent all occasions of transgressing the other precepts of the second table, by restraining this sin of covetousness in the heart; Psalm cxix. 35, 36. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

Q. 2. What doth this tenth command require of us in reference to ourselves?

A. It requires of us perfect contentment and satisfaction with that estate and condition wherein God hath placed us in

the world; Heb. xiii. 5. Let your converſation be without covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch things as ye have, *&c.* Reckoning it to be good for us to be in that ſtate we are, though never ſo low or afflicted; Pſalm cxix. 67. Before I was afflicted, I went aſtray; but now have I kept thy word. And verſe 71. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes.

Q. 3. Is contentment with God's appointments attainable in this life?

A. Some Chriſtians have attained to a very great meaſure, and eminent degree of contentment in the midſt of changeable and afflictive providences; Phil. iv. 11.——I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content. Pſalm xvi. 5, 6. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintaineſt my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage.

Q. 4. Is there no danger of the ſin of diſcontent in a full and proſperous condition?

A. Fulneſs of the world ſecures no man from the ſin of diſcontentment with his own, or coveting that which is another's; becauſe the deſires enlarge as the eſtate doth; Pſalm lxii. 10.—If riches increaſe, ſet not your heart upon them. An inſtance whereof we have in Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 4. And Ahab came into his houſe heavy and diſpleaſed, becauſe of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had ſpoken to him: for he had ſaid, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers; and he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

Q. 5. Whence doth diſcontent with our condition ſpring?

A. It ſprings partly from our ignorance of God's wiſdom and love in ordering all for our good; Rom. viii. 28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, *&c.* Partly from our inconſiderateneſs of the vanity of the creature; 1 Tim. vi. 7, 8. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. And partly from our unbelief; Matth. vi. 31, 32. Therefore take no thought, ſaying, What ſhall we eat? Or what ſhall we drink? Or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed? (For after all theſe things do the Gentiles ſeek;) for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all theſe things.

Q. 6. Is contentment with our own eſtate all that this commandment requires?

A. No; it requires a charitable frame of ſpirit towards our

neighbours alſo; Rom. xii. 10, 15. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Q. 7. What is the firſt ſin forbidden in this commandment?

A. It directly and eſpecially forbids all ſinful and inordinate deſires and motions after other men's enjoyments; Col. iii. 5. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs, which is idolatry.

Q. 8 What is the ſecond ſin forbidden in this commandment?

A. It forbids all cruelty and incompaſſionateneſs to others in neceſſity, and keeping back from them that relief which is made theirs by God's command; Prov. xi. 24. There is that with-holdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. Lev. xix. 9, 10. And when ye reap the harveſt of your land, thou ſhalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither ſhalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harveſt. And thou ſhalt not glean thy vineyard, neither ſhalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard: thou ſhalt leave them for the poor and the ſtranger: I am the Lord your God.

Q. 9. What is the third ſin forbidden in this commandment?

A. It forbids the detaining of the hirelings wages, when it is due; Hab. ii. 9, 10, 11. Wo to him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil. Thou haſt conſulted ſhame to thy houſe, by cutting off many people, and haſt ſinned againſt thy ſoul. For the ſtone ſhall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber ſhall anſwer it.

Q. 10. What is the fourth ſin forbidden in this commandment?

A. It forbids all inward grudgings at, and envyings of the enjoyments of others, whether they be inward goods of the mind, or outward, belonging to the body; 1 Cor. xiii. 14. Charity envieth not, *&c.*

Q. 11. What is the miſchief of covetouſneſs?

A. It diſtracts the heart in duties; Ezek. xxxiii. 31. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouths they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs. Provokes the wrath of God; Iſa.

lvii. 17. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him, *&c.* And where it reigns, it becomes idolatry; Col. iii. 5. And covetousness, which is idolatry.

Q. 12. What is the first inference from hence?

A. It calls all men to humiliation for the inordinacy of their affections towards the world, their discontent with their own, and envyings of others conditions.

Q. 13. What is the second inference hence?

A. As ever we would keep clear from this sin, let us make God our portion; Psalm xvi. 5, 6. The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot. And labour to get the soul-satisfying comforts of his Spirit; John iv. 14. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, *&c.* 2 Cor. vi. 10. As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

Q. 14. What is the last inference hence?

A. If God has given us a sufficiency of the things of this life for our necessity, let us be satisfied, though we want other things for our delight; 1 Tim. vi. 8. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. And relieve ourselves by an expectation of those better things laid up in heaven for us, if we be believers; James ii. 5. Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him.

Of keeping the Law.

Quest. 82. IS any man able perfectly to keep the commandments of God?

A. *No mere man since the fall, is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed.*

Q. 1. Wherein doth the perfect keeping of God's law consist?

A. It consists in the perfect and constant conformity of the internal and external actions of heart and life, to every command of God; Gal. iii. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. Matth. xxii. 37, 38, 39. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Q. 2. But if a man commit no external act against the law,

may he not be said perfectly to keep it, although in mind or thought he should transgress?

A. No; for an inward motion of sin in the heart, that never breaks forth into act, is a violation of the law, and brings the soul under the *curse* of it; Matth. v. 21, 22. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: And whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment, *&c.* And ver. 27, 28. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Q. 3. May not a man keep the law if he keep some of its commands, though he cannot keep every one of them punctually?

A. No, he cannot; for the transgression of any one command in the least degree, is a breach of all, and brings the curse of the whole upon a man's soul; James ii. 10. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Q. 4. Was the law never kept by any since it was made?

A. Yes, Adam in his innocent state kept it; for he was made upright; Eccl. vii. 29. God made man upright, *&c.* And Christ perfectly kept it; Matth. v. 17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

Q. 5. What is the first reason why no mere man in this life can fulfil and keep the law of God perfectly?

A. It is because the law of God is perfect, and the best of men in this life are imperfect; Psalm xix. 7. The law of the Lord is perfect, *&c.* Eccl. vii. 20. For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Q. 6. But may not men perfectly keep it when regenerate, and born of God?

A. No; because even in the regenerate there is a law of sin, which wars against the law of God; Gal. v. 17. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, *&c.* Rom. vii. 22, 23. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, *&c.* And though they are said not to sin, 1 John iii. 9. Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin, *&c.* That is not to be taken absolutely, but comparatively, as they once did, and others still do.

Q. 7. But did not Chriſt command the young man to keep the law?

A. It is true, that Chriſt did put the young man upon this task; Matth. xix. 17. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. But it was not on a ſuppoſition that he was able to do it; but to convince him of the impoſſibility of juſtification that way.

Q. 8. But doth not the apoſtle ſay, that the righteouſneſs of the law is fulfilled in believers?

A. It is true that the apoſtle doth ſay ſo, Rom. viii. 4. but the meaning is not, that we fulfil it in our own perſons, by our complete obedience to it; but it is fulfilled in us, by our union with Chriſt, who perfectly kept it; and the righteouſneſs of the law, which is in Chriſt, becomes ours, by God's imputation of it to us; Rom. iv. 23, 24. Now it was not written for his ſake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us alſo, to whom it ſhall be imputed, if we believe on him that raiſed up Jeſus our Lord from the dead.

Q. 9. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That juſtification by our own works is utterly impoſſible to the holieſt of men; Gal. ii. 16. For by the works of the law ſhall no fleſh be juſtified; Pſalm ciii. 3. If thou, Lord, ſhouldſt mark iniquities; O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. Hence we learn what an infinite mercy it is, that God ſent Jeſus Chriſt made under the law; Gal. iv. 4, 5. But when the fullneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, *&c.* To do that for us we could never do for ourſelves; Rom. viii. 3, 4. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh, God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin condemned ſin in the fleſh: that the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us; who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.

Q. 11. What is the third inference from hence?

A. That the dreadful curſe muſt needs lie on all unbelievers that are out of Chriſt; John iii. 36. He that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. And ſeek their juſtification by the deeds of the law; Gal. iii. 10. For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe, *&c.*

Q. 12. What is the fourth inference from hence?

A. That a deluge of ſin and miſery brake in upon the whole world by the fall of Adam, and all his poſterity being by him

pledged under both; Rom. v. 12. Wherefore, as by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin: And ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.

Q. 13. What is the fifth inference from hence?

A. That the popiſh doctrines of merits, and works of ſupererogation, are falſe and groundleſs doctrines, ſpringing out of the ignorance and pride of man's heart.

Q. 14. What is the laſt inference from hence?

A. That all God's people ſhould ſigh under their unhappy neceſſity of ſinning; Rom. vii. 24. O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death! And long to be with Chriſt in the perfect ſtate; Heb. xii. 23. And to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.

Of the inequality of Sin.

Queſt. 83. ARE all tranſgreſſions of the law equally heinous?

A. *Some ſins in themſelves, and by reaſon of ſeveral aggravations, are more heinous in the ſight of God than others.*

Q. 1. Whence ariſeth the firſt difference of ſin?

A. The firſt difference betwixt one ſin and another, ariſeth from the immediate object, againſt which the ſin is committed; on this account, ſins immediately committed againſt God, are more heinous than ſins immediately committed againſt man; 1 Sam. ii. 25. If one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him: But if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him? And all ſins of the firſt table are greater than thoſe of the ſecond: yet there are crying ſins againſt the ſecond.

Q. 2. What is the firſt ſin noted for an heinous ſin?

A. The ſin of murder is in ſcripture ſet down for an heinous and crying ſin in its own nature; Gen. iv. 10. The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the earth.

Q. 3. What other ſin is noted for a crying ſin?

A. The ſin of oppreſſion is noted in ſcripture for a crying ſin; Hab. ii. 11. For the ſtone ſhall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber ſhall anſwer it. Eſpecially the oppreſſion of the widow and fatherleſs; Exod. xxii. 22, 23. Ye ſhall not afflict any widow, or fatherleſs child. If thou afflict them in any wiſe, and they cry at all unto me, I will ſurely hear their cry.

Q. 4. What is reckoned in ſcripture an heinous ſin againſt the firſt table?

A. The ſin of atheiſm, or denying the being of God, is a ſin of the firſt magnitude; Job xxxi. 28. This alſo were an iniquity to be puniſhed by the judge: for I ſhould have denied

the God that is above. This was the sin of Pharaoh; Exod. v. 2. And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.

Q. 5. What other sin is heinous in God's account?

A. The sin of idolatry is a most heinous sin, and goes nearer to the heart of God than other sins do; Ezek. vi. 9. And they that escape of you, shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives; because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols; and they shall loath themselves, for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations. Jer. xliv. 4. O do not this abominable thing that I hate.

Q. 6. What is the most heinous of all the sins in the world?

A. The sin against the holy Ghost is the most heinous of all other sins, and shall never be forgiven by him; Matth. xii. 31. All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

Q. 7. From whence doth this scripture aggravate sin?

A. The Spirit of God in scripture aggravates and estimates sin, from the degree of light and knowledge men sin against; Luke xii. 47. And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. John xv. 22. If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: But now they have no cloak for their sin.

Q. 8. What is the second thing that aggravates sin?

A. The more mercies any man sins against, the greater is his sin; Rom. ii. 4. Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? And especially when it is against spiritual mercies, and means of salvation; Heb. ii. 3. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? &c.

Q. 9. Are heinous and crying sins capable of forgiveness?

A. Yes; great and heinous sins are capable of forgiveness, upon true repentance; Isa. i. 18. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Q. 10. From what fountain doth the pardon of all sins, both great and small, flow?

A. They all flow from the free grace of God; Luke vii. 41, 42. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave

them both. And through the meritorious, ſatisfying blood of Chriſt; Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of his grace.

Q. 11. What is the firſt inference hence?

A. Though ſome ſins are more heinous than others, yet no ſinner ſhould abſolutely deſpair of mercy; for the vileſt have been pardoned; 1 Cor. vi. 11. And ſuch were ſome of you: But ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, *&c.*

Q. 12. What is the ſecond inference hence?

A. That there are different degrees of torments in hell, proportioned to the different degrees of ſins on earth; Matth. xi. 21, 22. Wo unto thee, Chorazin, wo unto thee, Bethſaida: For if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in ſackcloth and aſhes. But I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the day of judgment, than for you.

Q. 13. What is the third inference hence?

A. That great ſinners, when pardoned and received to mercy, ſhould excel all others in love to Chriſt; Luke vii. 42, 43. Which of them will love him moſt? Simon anſwered and ſaid, I ſuppoſe that he to whom he forgave moſt. And he ſaid unto him, Thou haſt rightly judged.

Q. 14. What is the laſt inference hence?

A. Let no man neglect Chriſt becauſe his ſins are not ſo heinous as others; becauſe the leaſt ſin without Chriſt is damning: Rom. vi. 23. For the wages of ſin is death, *&c.* And greater ſinners are often called, when leſſer are not; Matth. xxi. 31, 32. The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

Of the Demerit of Sin.

Queſt. 84. WHat doth every ſin deſerve?

A. *Every ſin deſerveth God's wrath and curſe, both in this life, and that which is to come.*

Q. 1. Wherein doth the evil of ſin principally conſiſt?

A. It conſiſts principally in the offence it gives, and the wrong it doth to God; Pſalm li. 4. Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight.

Q. 2. What is the firſt offence and wrong ſin doth to God?

A. It conſiſts in its enmity to God; Rom. viii. 7. Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God, *&c.* Expreſſed in ſcripture by walking contrary to him; Lev. xxvi. 40. They have alſo walked contrary to me. Fighting againſt God; Acts v. 39.

Leſt haply ye be even found to fight againſt God. And reſiſting his Spirit; Acts vii. 51. Ye do always reſiſt the holy Ghoſt.

Q. 3. Wherein is its enmity to God further diſcovered in ſcripture?

A. It is diſcovered under the names and notions of hatred of God; Rom. i. 30. Backbiters, haters of God, *&c.* Rebellion againſt God; 1 Sam. xv. 23. For rebellion is as the ſin of witchcraft, *&c.* And deſpiſing the commandment of God; 2 Sam. xii. 9. Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the commandment of the Lord?

Q. 4. What are the attributes of God that ſin wrongs?

A. It wrongs all his attributes; for it ſlights his ſovereignty; Exod. v. 2. And Pharaoh ſaid, Who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey his voice, to let Iſrael go? Reſiſts his power; 1 Cor. x. 22. Are we ſtronger than he? Deſpiſeth his goodneſs; Rom. ii. 4. Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, *&c.* Taxeth his juſtice; Ezek. xviii. 25. Yet ye ſay, the way of the Lord is not equal, *&c.* And clouds his holineſs; Jam. ii. 7. Do not they blaſpheme that worthy name, by the which ye are called?

Q. 5. What doth ſin deſerve in the courſe of juſtice from God?

A. It deſerves all temporal and eternal effects of God's wrath, on the ſouls and bodies of ſinners, all which in ſcripture go under the name of death; Rom. vi. 23. For the wages of ſin is death, *&c.*

Q. 6. Can theſe ſufferings ſatisfy God for all this wrong?

A. No, they cannot; and therefore they muſt, and ſhall be eternal on the damned; Matth. v. 26. Verily, I ſay unto thee, thou ſhalt by no means come out thence, till thou haſt paid the uttermoſt farthing. Mark ix. 44. Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Q. 7. Shall all ſinners bear the deſert of their ſins?

A. No; all that are out of Chriſt ſhall; but Chriſt hath freed believers from it; John iii. 18. He that believeth on him, is not condemned, *&c.*

Q. 8. But is it not hard, that ſinners ſhould ſuffer eternally for the ſins of a few years?

A. No, it is not; for the evil of ſin is not to be meaſured by the time in which, but by the object againſt which it is committed; Pſalm li. 4, 5. Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight, *&c.*

Q. 9. What learn we from hence?

A. Hence in the firſt place we learn the impoſſibility of ſatisfying God's juſtice for the leaſt ſin that ever we committed; Job vii. 20. I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee? *&c.*

Pſalm cxxx. 3. If thou, Lord, ſhouldſt mark iniquity, O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inſtruction hence?

A. Hence we ſee the neceſſity of a Mediator betwixt God and us; Pſalm xl. 6, 7. Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire, *&c.* Then ſaid I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.

Q. 11. What is the third inſtruction hence?

A. That the greateſt ſuffering is rather to be choſen than the leaſt ſin; Heb. xi. 25. Chuſing rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon.

Q. 12. What is the fourth inſtruction hence?

A. It teacheth us what an invaluable mercy the full, free, and final remiſſion of ſin is; Pſalm xxxii. 1. Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered, *&c.*

Q. 13. What is the fifth inſtruction hence?

A. It vindicates God in his ſevereſt ſtrokes on ſinners; Hoſ. vi. 5. Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets: I have ſlain them by the words of my mouth, and thy judgments are as the light that goeth forth.

Q. 14. What is the laſt inſtruction?

A. Hence we learn the infinite nature of Chriſt's ſufferings; Rom. viii. 32. He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?

Of what God requires of us.

Queſt. 85. WHat doth God require of us, that we may eſcape his wrath and curſe due to us for ſin?

A. *To eſcape the wrath and curſe of God due to us for ſin, God requireth of us faith in Jeſus Chriſt, repentance unto life, with the diligent uſe of all the outward means, whereby Chriſt communicateth to us the benefits of redemption.*

Q. 1. What are the things required of us to eſcape God's wrath and curſe due to us for ſin?

A. The things required of us, are, (1.) Faith in Jeſus Chriſt; Acts xvi. 31. And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy houſe. (2.) Repentance for ſin; Acts iii. 19. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, *&c.* (3.) Diligent ſtriving in the uſe of all God's appointed means; Luke xiii. 24. Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate: For many, I ſay unto you, ſhall ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able.

Q. 2. Are theſe things in man's power to perform, that God requires of him?

A. Though they are our duties, yet we have no power in ourſelves by nature to perform them, but the power is of God; 2 Cor. iii. 5. Not that we are ſufficient of ourſelves to think any thing as of ourſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God.

Q. 3. But if men be in Chriſt, and juſtified from eternity, what need of this?

A. Though God from eternity decreed, and Chriſt long ſince purchaſed the ſalvation of the elect; yet have they no union with Chriſt till they believe; Eph. iii. 17. That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love. Nor remiſſion of ſin; Acts iii. 19. That your ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord. But lie under wrath as others do; Eph. ii. 3, 12. And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Ver. 12. That at that time ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the common wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the world.

Q. 4. If it be God that can only work theſe graces in us, to what purpoſe is our ſtriving?

A. God's working doth not exclude man's ſtriving, but more excites and obliges us to it; Phil. ii. 12, 13. Work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling: For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his own good pleaſure.

Q. 5. To what purpoſe is it to ſtrive in the uſe of means, except we knew we were elected?

A. The knowledge of our election is not antecedent to our diligence, but our diligence is required antecedently to that knowledge; 1 Pet. i. 10. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election ſure, *&c.*

Q. 6. Is it not legal to put natural men upon ſtriving in the uſe of means?

A. No, it is not; for Chriſt himſelf enjoins it; Luke xiii. 24. Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, *&c.* And ſo did the apoſtles after him; Acts viii. 22. Repent therefore of this thy wickedneſs, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee.

Q. 7. Is there no eſcaping of God's wrath and curſe without faith and repentance?

A. No, it is impoſſible to eſcape them; John iii. 18. He that believeth not, is condemned already. Heb. ii. 3. How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation?

Q. 8. But if a man reform his life, and live ſoberly and juſtly for time to come, may he not that way eſcape God's wrath and curſe?

A. No; ſobriety and reformation are duties, but it is faith and regeneration that puts men into Chriſt, and out of danger; Matth. v. 20. Except your righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the kingdom of heaven. Tit. iii. 5. Not by works of righteouſneſs, which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghoſt.

Q. 9. Do all believing and penitent ſinners eſcape God's wrath and curſe?

A. Yes, they do, and ſhall for ever eſcape it; Rom. viii. 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, *&c.* Col. i. 12, 13. Giving thanks unto God the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkneſs, and hath tranſlated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. John v. 24. He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation; but is paſſed from death unto life.

Q. 10. What is the firſt inference hence?

A. Hence it appears how falſe and dangerous the Antinomian doctrine is, which teaches that our ſins are pardoned before they are committed, or we either believe or repent; contrary to Acts xxvi. 18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſin, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified by faith that is in me. James v. 20. He which converteth the ſinner from the error of his way, ſhall ſave a ſoul from death, *&c.* Acts x. 43. To him give all the prophets witneſs, that through his name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond inference hence?

A. Hence it follows, that it is dangerous on the one ſide not to ſtrive in all the ways of duty for Chriſt and ſalvation, contrary to Luke xiii. 24. Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; for many, I ſay unto you, will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able. And as dangerous, on the other ſide, to reſt in, and depend on our own works and duties; Phil. iii. 9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.

Q. 12. What is the third inference hence?

A. Hence we learn the miserable state of all unbelievers, and impenitent persons; the curse and wrath of God lies upon them; Gal. iii. 10. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, *&c.* And their mittimus for hell is already made; John iii. 18. He that believeth not, is condemned already.

Q. 13. What is the fourth inference hence?

A. Hence we learn the happy state into which faith and repentance bring the souls of men; Acts xiii. 38, 39. By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Of saving Faith.

Quest. 86. WHat is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. *Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.*

Q. 1. What is the root or cause of faith?

A. Not the power of man's will; Eph. ii. 8. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: But the Spirit of God; Gal. v. 22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith. John i. 12, 13. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Q. 2. How doth the Spirit of God ordinarily produce faith?

A. By the preaching of the word he ordinarily begets it; Rom. x. 17. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; though sometimes he doth it immediately.

Q. 3. Who are the proper subjects of faith?

A. Convinced and sensible sinners are the proper subjects of faith; John xvi. 8, 9. 10. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me: of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more: of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

Q. 4. What is the seat or habitation of faith?

A. Not only the head or understanding, but principally the heart and will; Rom. x. 10. With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, *&c.* Acts viii. 37. And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.

Q. 5. But is not the assent of the understanding true faith?

A. The mere assent of the understanding to the truths of scripture, is not such a faith as will save the soul; James ii. 19.

Thou believeſt that there is one God; thou doſt well: the devils alſo believe, and tremble.

Q. 6. What is the act of faith that juſtifies a ſinner?

A. It is the receiving of Chriſt, by the full and hearty conſent of the heart that juſtifies us; John i. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Q. 7. What is the object of faith?

A. The primary object of faith is the perſon of Chriſt, and the ſecondary his benefits; Iſa. xlv. 22. Look unto me and be ſaved, all the ends of the earth, *&c.* Phil. iii. 8, 9. Yea, doubtleſs, and I count all things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord: For whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt, and be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt; the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.

Q. 8. May not a man look partly to Chriſt, and partly to his own works and duties for righteouſneſs?

A. No; he muſt eye Chriſt only, and exclude all others, or he cannot be juſtified; Phil. iii. 9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt: The righteouſneſs which is of God by faith. Rom. iv. 5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.

Q. 9. Is it enough to eye the perſon of Chriſt only in believing?

A. No; we muſt eye the perſon of Chriſt, as cloathed with all his offices; Acts xvi. 31. And they ſaid, Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thine houſe. Our ignorance needs him as a prophet, our guilt as a prieſt, our ſins and enemies as a king.

Q. 10. Is true faith excluſive of all fears and doubts?

A. No; it is not, but true believers are troubled with many fears and doubtings; Iſa. l. 10. Who is he among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light, *&c.* Mark ix. 24. And ſtraightway the Father of the child crieth out with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.

Q. 11. Is no man actually juſtified till he believe?

A. No, he cannot be juſtified actually till he believe actually; Gal. iii. 22. But the ſcripture hath concluded all under ſin, that the promiſe by faith of Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that believe. John iii. 18. He that believeth on him, is not

condemned: But he that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Q. 12. Is every man that believes juſtified immediately and fully upon his believing?

A. Yes, he is; Rom. v. 1. Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. John v. 24. He that heareth my words, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation; but is paſſed from death unto life.

Q. 13. What is the true character or deſcription of a believer?

A. He is one that having been convinced of his ſin and miſery, and of his own and all other creatures inability to ſave him, and of the ability and willingneſs of Chriſt to ſave him, lets go all hold and dependance on creatures, and his own righteouſneſs, and caſts himſelf entirely upon Chriſt for righteouſneſs and life.

Of the Properties, Signs, and Means of Faith.

Queſt. 1. WHat is the firſt property of faith?

A. It is a moſt precious grace; 2 Pet. i. 1. To them that have obtained like precious faith with us, *&c.* And muſt needs be ſo, ſeeing it is the bond of our union with Chriſt; Eph. iii. 17. That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love. That by which we are juſtified; Rom. v. 1. Therefore being juſtified by faith, *&c.* And that by which our ſouls do live; Heb. ii. 4. The juſt ſhall live by faith.

Q. 2. What is the ſecond property of ſaving faith?

A. The ſecond property of faith is this, that it is the moſt uſeful grace in this world to a believer, it being the ſoul's eye; Heb. xi. 27. By faith he forſook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: For he endured, as ſeeing him who is inviſible, *&c.* It is hard to apprehend Chriſt; Phil. iii. 12. That I may apprehend that for which alſo I am apprehended of Chriſt Jeſus. It is cordial in a fainting ſeaſon; Pſalm xxvii. 3. I had fainted, unleſs I had believed, *&c.*

Q. 3. What are the foundations that ſupport faith?

A. The firſt foundation or prop of faith, is the power of God; Rom. iv. 20, 21. He ſtaggered not at the promiſe through unbelief, but was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully perſuaded, that what he had promiſed, he was able alſo to perform. Heb. vii. 25. He is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt that come unto God by him, *&c.*

Q. 4. What is the ſecond prop of faith?

A. The truth and faithfulneſs of God in his promiſes; Heb. x. 23. Let us hold faſt the profeſſion of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that hath promiſed. Heb. vi. 18. That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have a ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us.

Q. 5. What encourages the faith of the ſaints?

A. The manifold, ſweet, and ſenſible experiences of others; Pſalm lxxiv. 14. Thou breakeſt the heads of Leviathan in pieces, and gaveſt him to be meat for the people inhabiting the wilderneſs. And eſpecially their own experiences; Joſh. xxiii. 14. Ye know in all your hearts, and in all your ſouls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God ſpake concerning you; all are come to paſs unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

Q. 6. What is the firſt ſign of a weak faith?

A. Staggerings in our aſſent to divine truths, argue the weakneſs of faith; Rom. iv. 10. He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in faith, *&c.*

Q. 7. What is the ſecond ſign of a weak faith?

A. Inability to truſt God in time of danger, evidenced by ſinful haſte to avoid it; Iſa. xxviii. 16. He that believeth, ſhall not make haſte.

Q. 8. What is the third ſign of a weak faith?

A. When we cannot live purely by faith, except we have ſome ſenſible encouragement; John xx. 25. Except I ſhall ſee in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thruſt my hand into his ſide, I will not believe.

Q. 9. What is the fourth ſign of a weak faith?

A. When a new temptation makes us eaſily let go our former confidence; Luke xxiv. 21. But we truſted that it had been he which ſhould have redeemed Iſrael: And beſides all this, to-day is the third day ſince theſe things were done.

Q. 10. What is the fifth ſign of a weak faith?

A. The prevalence of carnal fears, in times of trouble, argues weak faith; Matth. viii. 26. And he ſaith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? *&c.*

Q. 11. What is the ſixth ſign of a weak faith?

A. Too much carefulneſs and anxiety about the things of this life; Matth. vi. 30. Wherefore if God ſo clothe the graſs of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is caſt into the oven, ſhall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Q. 12. What is the firſt benefit of a ſtrong faith?

A. A ſtrong faith gives much glory to God; Rom. iv. 19, 20. And being not weak in faith, he conſidered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadneſs of Sarah's womb. He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbelief; but was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God.

Q. 13. What is the ſecond benefit of a ſtrong faith?

A. It gives the ſoul the raviſhing foreſight and foretaſtes of heaven upon earth; 1 Pet. i. 8. Whom having not ſeen, ye love; in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.

Q. 14. What is the laſt office faith doth for a believer in this world?

A. It ſupports and encourages him at death by the promiſes, when all other comforts fail; Heb. xi. 13. Theſe all died in faith, not having received the promiſes, but having ſeen them afar off, and were perſuaded of them, and embraced them, and confeſſed that they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Of ſaving Repentance.

Queſt. 87. WHat is repentance unto life?

A. *Repentance unto life is a ſaving grace, whereby a ſinner, out of a true ſenſe of his ſin, and apprehenſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt, doth with grief and hatred of his ſin, turn from it unto God, with full purpoſe of, and endeavour after new obedience.*

Q. 1. Who is the author of ſaving repentance?

A. The Spirit of God is the author of it; the heart by nature is ſo hard, that none but the Spirit can break it; Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you: And I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh. And I will put my Spirit within you, *&c.*

Q. 2. In what act doth all true repentance begin?

A. It begins in a true ſight and ſenſe of ſin, and the danger and miſery we are in by ſin; Acts ii. 37. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, *&c.*

Q. 3. Why doth God work ſuch a ſenſe of ſin and miſery?

A. He doth it to make Chriſt deſireable in the ſinner's eyes, that he may fly to him; Matth. ix. 12, 13. But when Jeſus heard that, he ſaid unto them, They that be whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.

Q. 4. Is the ſight of ſin ſufficient to repentance?

A. No; there muſt be appprehenſion of mercy and forgiveneſs with God, or elſe no man can ſincerely repent; Rom. ii. 4. Not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance. And this mercy muſt be diſcerned in and through Chriſt; Zech. xii. 10. And they ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born.

Q. 5. Wherein doth repentance chiefly conſiſt?

A. It conſiſts in real inward ſorrow for ſin, as committed againſt God; Pſalm li. 3, 4. For I acknowledge my tranſgreſſions, and my ſin is ever before me. Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight, *&c.* A loathing of ourſelves for it; Ezek. xxxvi. 31. And ſhall loath yourſelves in your own ſight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations. And of our beſt duties, as ſinful and inſufficient things; Iſa. lxiv. 5, 6. We are all as an unclean thing; and all our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags, *&c.*

Q. 6. Wherein elſe doth it conſiſt?

A. In turning from ſin, as well as grieving for it; Iſa. lv. 7. Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, *&c.* Prov. xxviii. 13. He that covereth his ſins, ſhall not proſper; but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them, ſhall have mercy.

Q. 7. Is turning from ſin ſufficient?

A. No, that is but the negative part of religion; there muſt be alſo a ſincere turning to God; Pſalm cxix. 59. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies; Acts xi. 23. And exhorted them all, that with purpoſe of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

Q. 8. Is all ſorrow for ſin ſaving?

A. No; there is a repentance that doth no good; Matth. xxvii. 3. Then Judas which had betrayed him, when he ſaw that he was condemned, repented himſelf, *&c.* And a repentance unto life; Acts xi. 18. Then hath God alſo to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Q. 9. What are the ſigns of true repentance?

A. Fear of ſin; care to preſerve ourſelves from it; and zeal to honour God by new obedience; 2 Cor. vii. 11. For behold, this ſelf-ſame thing that ye ſorrowed after a godly ſort, what carefulneſs it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourſelves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement deſire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge? In all things you have approved yourſelves to be clear in this matter.

Q. 10. Is there a neceſſity of repentance, in order to forgiveneſs?

A. Yes, there is; and they are therefore conjoined in ſcripture; Acts v. 31. For to give repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins. And deſtruction threatened to the impenitent; Luke xiii. 3. Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.

Q. 11. What is the firſt inference hence?

A. That it is a falſe doctrine, which teaches us that ſins are actually forgiven from eternity; and therefore no need either of repentance or prayer, ſave only for the manifeſtation of pardon.

Q. 12. What is the ſecond inference hence?

A. That an hard heart is a dreadful ſign of a loſt ſtate of ſoul; Rom. ii. 5. But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up unto thyſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.

Q. 13. What is the laſt inference hence?

A. That there is no cauſe to deſpair of the vileſt ſinner, ſeeing there is power enough in the Spirit of God to break the hardeſt heart; Ezek. xxxvi. 26. I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh.

Of Chriſt's Ordinances.

Queſt. 88. WHat are the outward means whereby Chriſt communicateth to us the benefits of redemption?

A. *The outward and ordinary means whereby Chriſt communicateth to us the benefits of redemption, are his ordinances; eſpecially the word, ſacraments, and prayer; all which are made effectual to the elect for ſalvation.*

Q. 1. What makes any thing become a divine ordinance?

A. The inſtitution or appointment of God, is that alone which makes a divine ordinance; Matth. xxviii. 20. Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you, *&c.*

Q. 2. Are the inſtitutions of all ordinances alike clear in ſcripture?

A. No: Some are more explicitly and clearly revealed in ſcripture than others; as the Lord's ſupper is more clear than baptiſm: But whatever hath ſcripture-warrant, in the words or conſequence, is of divine appointment.

Q. 3. May not men inſtitute ordinances of divine worſhip?

A. No; this in ſcripture is condemned as will-worſhip; Col. ii. 20, 22, 23. Wherefore if ye be dead with Chriſt from the rudiments of the world; why, as though living in the world, are ye ſubject to ordinances? *&c.* Which things indeed have a ſhew of wiſdom in will-worſhip, *&c.*

Q. 4. Why cannot man institute a divine ordinance?

A. He cannot do it, because it is the prerogative belonging to Christ's kingly office; Matth. xxviii. 20. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

Q. 5. For what other reason cannot man do it?

A. Because he cannot bless them, and make them effectual to their ends: but they will be in vain; Matth. xv. 9. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Q. 6. Why are the ordinances called means of salvation?

A. Because by and through them the Spirit of the Lord conveys spiritual graces into mens souls; 1 Cor. i. 21. It pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe, 1 Cor. iii. 5. Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

Q. 7. Whence is the virtue of ordinances?

A. It is not in and from themselves, or the gifts and abilities of him that administers them, but from the blessing and Spirit of the Lord; 1 Cor. iii. 7. Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.

Q. 8. Do all God's ordinances attain their end?

A. Yes; there is none of them in vain, but do attain their end, in the salvation or damnation of all that come under them; Isa. lv. 10, 11. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be, that goeth forth out of my mouth: It shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other the savour of life unto life, *&c.*

Q. 9. Are instituted ordinances the only means of salvation?

A. They are not the only means; for God can convert men to Christ without them; Acts ix. 4, 5. And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest: It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. But they are the ordinary standing means; Rom. x. 14, 15. How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear

without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? &c.

Q. 10. To whom are the ordinances made effectual to salvation?

A. To all God's elect they are effectual to salvation, and to them only; Acts xiii. 48. As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed. John x. 26. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, &c.

Q. 11. What is the first instruction from hence?

A. That great preparation is due to all the ordinances, before we engage in them; Job xi. 13, 14. If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him. If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. 1 Chron. xxix. 18. And prepare their heart unto thee.

Q. 12. What is the second inference from hence?

A. That great reverence is due to God's ordinances, when we are actually engaged in the use of them; Psalm lxxxix. 7. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

Q. 13. What is the third inference from hence?

A. That those people that want ordinances, are in a sad and deplorable condition; Eph. ii. 11, 12. Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

Q. 14. What is the last instruction hence?

A. That those that perish in the midst of ordinances, and means of salvation, will perish with aggravated perdition; Mat. xi. 23. And thou Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

Of the Word read and heard.

Quest. 89. HOW is the word made effectual to salvation?

A. *The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners; and building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation.*

Q. 1. What mean you by the word?

A. By the word is meant the word of God, consigned to

writing in the books of the Old and New Teſtament; which though it be miniſtered by men, yet is no other than the very word of God, and as ſuch to be received; 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. For this cauſe alſo thank we God without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men; but (as it is in truth) the word of God, *&c.*

Q. 2. Whence is the efficacy of this word?

A. It is wholly from the Spirit of God that it becomes effectual to any man's ſalvation; 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7. I have planted, and Apollos watered, but God gave the increaſe. So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increaſe.

Q. 3. Is the reading of the ſcripture an ordinance of God for men's ſalvation?

A. Yes, it is; Deut. xvii. 19. And it ſhall be with him, and he ſhall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and theſe ſtatutes to do them. And in reading of it, God ſometimes comes in by his Spirit to mens converſion; Acts viii. 27, 28, 29. And he aroſe and went, and behold a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treaſure, and had come to Jeruſalem for to worſhip, was returning, and ſitting in his chariot, read Iſaias the prophet. Then the Spirit ſaid to Philip, Go near, and join thyſelf to this chariot, *&c.*

Q. 4. Is the hearing of the word a means of ſalvation?

A. Yes, it is; Iſa. lv. 3. Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your ſoul ſhall live, *&c.* 1 Cor. i. 21. It pleaſed God, by the fooliſhneſs of preaching, to ſave them that believe.

Q. 5. To what end is the word uſeful to men?

A. The firſt end and uſe of the word is to convince men of their ſin and miſery out of Chriſt; 1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25. But if all propheſy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the ſecrets of his heart made manifeſt, *&c.*

Q. 6. What is it uſeful for, beſides conviction?

A. It is uſeful for converſion, as well as conviction; Pſalm xix. 7. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul, *&c.* Acts xxvi. 18. To turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, *&c.*

Q. 7. Doth the word convince and convert all that hear it?

A. No, but thoſe only that are ordained to eternal life; Acts xiii. 48. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

Q. 8. What elſe is the word uſeful for?

A. To build up the ſaints to perfection in Chriſt; Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13. And he gave ſome apoſtles, and ſome prophets, and ſome evangeliſts, and ſome paſtors and teachers; for the perfecting of the ſaints, for the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt. Acts xx. 32. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them that are ſanctified.

Q. 9. May the common people read the ſcriptures?

A. Yes, it is a duty commanded by Chriſt; John v. 39. Search the ſcriptures, *&c.* And commended by the apoſtle; Acts xvii. 11. Theſe were more noble than thoſe in Theſſalonica, in that they received the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the ſcriptures daily, whether thoſe things were ſo.

Q. 10. Is it their duty or liberty alſo to preach it?

A. No, it is not; for beſides abilities for that work, there muſt be a call; Rom. x. 14, 15. How ſhall they hear without a preacher? and how ſhall they preach, except they be ſent, *&c.*

Q. 11. What is the firſt inſtruction from hence?

A. That the enjoyments of the ſcriptures, and an able faithful miniſtry to expound and apply them, is a ſpecial mercy to any people; Pſalm cxlvii. 19, 20. He ſheweth his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and judgments unto Iſrael; he hath not dealt ſo with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them.

Q. 12. What is the ſecond inſtruction?

A. That men cannot expect ſpecial and ſpiritual bleſſings from God in the wilful neglect of the ordinances; Prov. xxviii. 9. He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer ſhall be abomination.

Q. 13. What is the third inference?

A. That ſad is their condition, who ſit all their days under the word to no purpoſe at all; 2 Cor. iv. 3. 4. If our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine into them.

Q. 14. What is the laſt inference?

A. That Chriſt's ordinances and miniſters ſhould be moſt welcome to the people to whom God ſends them; Iſa. lii. 7. How

beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

Of the Manner of Hearing.

Quest. 90. HOW is the word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to salvation?

A. *That the word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer, receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practise it in our lives.*

Q. 1. If the matter we read or hear be good, is not that enough for our salvation?

A. No, God requires that the word be read and heard in a due manner, and the manner of hearing is of special regard with God; Luke viii. 18. Take heed therefore how ye hear, &c.

Q. 2. How many things belong to the due manner of hearing?

A. Three sorts of duties belong to it; some antecedent, as preparation and prayer; some concomitant, as due diligence and retention; and some subsequent, as practice.

Q. 3. What is due preparation for hearing?

A. It consists in serious consideration of the greatness and holiness of that God whom we approach in hearing the word; Acts x. 33. Now therefore we are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. And awing the heart even to a degree of holy trembling thereby; Isa. lxvi. 2. To him will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Q. 4. What is the principal consideration thus to awe the heart?

A. The word is in its own nature an heart-searching word; Heb. iv. 12. For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And that eventually it will be the savour of life or death to us; 2 Cor. ii. 16. To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life, &c.

Q. 5. What else belongs to due preparation to hear?

A. The discharging of the heart from worldly cares; Matth. xiii. 7. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choaked them. And carnal lusts; James i. 21. Where-

fore lay apart all filthineſs and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, and receive with meekneſs the ingrafted word, which is able to ſave your ſouls.

Q. 6. What is the third act of due preparation?

A. Longing after the word for further communications of grace by it; 1 Pet. ii. 2. As new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. Iſa. ii. 3. And many people ſhall go and ſay, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the houſe of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion ſhall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jeruſalem.

Q. 7. What is the ſecond antecedent duty of hearing?

A. Prayer is an antecedent duty to hearing the word, and that both for the aſſiſtance of the miniſter; 2 Theſſ. iii. 1. Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free courſe, and be glorified, even as it is with you. And our own illumination; Pſalm cxix. 18. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

Q. 8. What elſe ſhould we pray for?

A. That God would pour out his Spirit with the word, according to that promiſe, Prov. i. 23. I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you.

Q. 9. Doth unpreparedneſs for the word always hinder its efficacy on the heart?

A. No, God ſometimes is found of them that ſought him not; Iſa. lxv. 1. I was found of them that ſought me not, *&c.* But it is a ſin to neglect it, and needs a pardon of God.

Q. 10. What is the firſt motive to prepare for ſolemn duties?

A. That it argues the ſincerity of the heart, and in that caſe God will be merciful to infirmities; 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19. For a multitude of the people, even a multitude of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, Iſſachar and Zebulun, had not cleanſed themſelves, yet did eat the paſſover, but not as it is written; wherefore Hezekiah prayed for them, ſaying, The good Lord be merciful towards him that prepareth his whole heart to ſeek the Lord God, the God of his fathers, though he be not cleanſed according to the purification of the ſanctuary.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond motive?

A. It is a ſweet ſign that God will make that duty ſucceſsful for which the heart is prepared; Pſalm x. 17. Thou prepareſt their heart; thou bendeſt thine ear to them.

Q. 12. What is the third motive to preparation?

A. The majeſty and jealouſy of God, to whom we approach,

obliges us to ſolemn perparation; Heb. xii. 28, 29. Whereby we may ſerve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a conſuming fire.

Q. 13. But muſt a man neglect the duty, if his heart be not duly prepared for it?

A. No; for that would be to add a new ſin to a former, and aggravate it the more.

Q. 14. In what manner muſt the prepared heart go to the word?

A. Not in dependance on its own preparations, but upon the Spirit's aſſiſtance; Pſalm lxxi. 16. I will go forward in the ſtrength of the Lord God, *&c.*

Q. 15. What is the firſt act of faith due to the word?

A. The aſſenting act of faith is required to the word read or preached, whereby we acknowledge it to be of divine authority; 2 Tim. iii. 16. All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs; 2 Peter i. 21. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.

Q. 16. What is the ſecond act of faith required of us?

A. An applying act of faith is alſo required of us; Rom. xv. 4. For whatſoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures might have hope.

Q. 17. What is the firſt end in applying the word?

A. It is firſt to be applied to our conviction both of ſin and miſery; Acts ii. 37. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and ſaid unto Peter, and to the reſt of the apoſtles, Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?

Q. 18. What is the ſecond end, or uſe of applying it?

A. It muſt be applied for our guidance and direction to Chriſt; John vi. 45. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me.

Q. 19. What is the third uſe to which it muſt be applied?

A. We muſt apply it for our direction through the whole courſe of Chriſtian duties; 2 Pet. i. 19. We have alſo a more ſure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in your hearts.

Q. 20. What other uſe muſt we apply it to?

A. It muſt be applied for our comfort in all inward and outward troubles; Rom. xv. 4. For whatſoever things were writ-

ten aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures might have hope.

Q. 21. On what account are we to receive it with love?

A. We are to love it for its author's ſake, becauſe it is the word of God; Pſalm cxix. 159. Conſider how I love thy precepts, *&c.*

Q. 22. What is the ſecond motive of love to the word?

A. The holineſs and purity of it deſerves and engages our love to it; Pſalm cxix. 140. Thy word is very pure: therefore thy ſervant loveth it.

Q. 23. What is the third motive to engage our love to it?

A. The great and conſtant uſefulneſs of it to our ſouls, as that we cannot ſubſiſt without; Job xxiii. 12. I have eſteemed the words of his mouth more than my neceſſary food.

Q. 24. How doth this love to the word manifeſt itſelf?

A. Our love manifeſts itſelf in our longing after it; Pſalm cxix. 20. My ſoul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. Our diligent attendance on it; Acts x. 33. Immediately therefore I ſent unto thee, and thou haſt well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here preſent before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

Q. 25. How is faith and love evidenced to the word after hearing it?

A. By preſerving it carefully in our hearts and memories; Pſalm cxix. 11. Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.

Q. 26. What is the beſt cure for a bad memory?

A. Labour to get an high eſteem of it, and an experimental feeling of it, and frequently meditate on it; Pſalm cxix. 16. I will delight myſelf in thy ſtatutes: I will not forget thy word. Pſalm cxix. 93. I will never forget thy precepts; for with them thou haſt quickened me. Pſalm cxix. 99. Thy teſtimonies are my meditation.

Q. 27. How is faith and love principally manifeſted to the word after hearing?

A. It is principally manifeſted by bringing forth the fruits of it in our lives; Col. i. 5, 6. For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the goſpel, which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth alſo in you, ſince the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.

Q. 28. What is the uſe of all this?

A. This ſerves to reprove our formal and dead hearing the

word, and excites us all to evidence and exerciſe more faith, love, and obedience, in hearing it.

Of Sacraments, as Means of Salvation.

Queſt. 91. HOW do the ſacraments become effectual means of ſalvation?

A. *The ſacraments become effectual means of ſalvation, not from any virtue in them, or in him that doth adminiſter them, but only by the bleſſing of Chriſt, and the working of his Spirit in them that by faith receive them.*

Q. 1. What is the firſt proper ſenſe of this word ſacrament?

A. It primarily ſignifies a ſolemn oath taken by ſoldiers, when they liſt themſelves under a prince or general; and this oath was mutual.

Q. 2. Why do we uſe it, ſeeing it is not a ſcripture word?

A. Though the word be not found in ſcripture, yet the thing intended by it is, and that brings the word in uſe: for in the ſacraments God obliges himſelf to us by confirming his covenant by it; Rom. iv. 11. And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith, which he had yet being uncircumciſed: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumciſed; that righteouſneſs might be imputed unto them alſo. And we oblige ourſelves to God; Rom. vi. 3, 4. Know ye not that ſo many of us as were baptized into Chriſt, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life.

Q. 3. What is here meant by ſalvation?

A. By ſalvation is meant our complete and final deliverance from ſin and miſery, both temporal and eternal. From ſin, Matth i. 21. For he ſhall ſave his people from their ſins. From miſery, 1 Theſ. i. 10. Even Jeſus who delivereth us from the wrath to come.

Q. 4. What is a mean of ſalvation?

A. A mean of ſalvation ſignifies any appointment of God, whereby he promotes and accompliſhes his deſign of ſaving our ſouls; ſo the word is a mean; Rom. i. 16. For I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt, for it is the power of God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth.

Q. 5. How doth the word and ſacraments differ as means of ſalvation?

A. The word is appointed to be the firſt means of begetting

faith; 1 Cor. iii. 5. Who then is Paul? And who is Apollos? But miniſters by whom ye believed, *&c.* Sacraments are to ſeal and confirm it; Rom. iv. 11. And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith, *&c.*

Q. 6. What is meant by an effectual mean of ſalvation?

A. By an effectual mean, is meant ſuch a mean as fully obtains and accompliſhes the end it was appointed for, 1 Theſſ. ii. 13. Becauſe when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men; but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe.

Q. 7. Do not all the means of ſalvation prove effectual to men?

A. Though the means of ſalvation prove effectual to all God's elect, yet they are ſo not to others; Acts xxviii. 23, 24. And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging, to whom he expounded and teſtified the kingdom of God, perſuading them concerning Jeſus, both out of the law of Moſes, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And ſome believed the things which were ſpoken, and ſome believed not.

Q. 8. Do not the ſacraments ſave all that partake of them?

A. No, they do not; baptiſm may paſs on a caſt-away; Acts viii. 23. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and in the bond of iniquity. And the Lord's ſupper may be received unworthily; 1 Cor. xi. 27. Wherefore, whoſoever ſhall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, ſhall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Q. 9. What is the reaſon they prove not effectual to all?

A. Becauſe their virtue and efficacy is not in themſelves, but in God; for we ſee they work as God's Spirit concurs, or not concurs with them, as in the inſtance before given.

Q. 10. But is not that for want of wiſdom, holineſs, or zeal in the miniſter, that they have no more efficacy?

A. No, it is not principally, or only from thence; for it is not in the power of the holieſt miniſter in the world to make them effectual; 1 Cor. iii. 7. Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increaſe.

Q. 11. Whence is it that ſacraments become effectual?

A. It is only from the Spirit of Chriſt working in them, and by them on the ſouls of men; 1 Cor. xii. 13. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,—and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Q. 12. What is the firſt inſtruction hence?

A. That men enjoying all the ordinances of the goſpel, and partaking of the ſacraments annexed to the covenant of grace, may yet periſh for ever; 1 Cor. x. 3, 4, 5. And did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat; and did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink; (for they drank of that ſpiritual rock that followed them: and that rock was Chriſt). But with many of them God was not well pleaſed: for they were overthrown in the wilderneſs; Luke xiii. 26, 27. Then ſhall ye begin to ſay, we have eaten and drunk in thy preſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets. But he ſhall ſay, I tell you, I know you not whence you are; depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.

Q. 13. What is the ſecond inference?

A. That men ſhould not idolize ſome miniſters for the excellency of their gifts, and deſpiſe others, ſeeing it is not in them to make the means effectual.

Q. 14. What is the laſt inference?

A. That in all our attendence upon the means of ſalvation, we ſhould be careful to beg the Spirit and bleſſing of Chriſt, without which they cannot be effectual to our ſalvation.

Of the Nature of Sacraments.

Queſt. 92. WHat is a ſacrament?

A. *A ſacrament is an holy ordinance inſtituted by Chriſt; wherein by ſenſible ſigns, Chriſt and the benefits of the new covenant are repreſented, ſealed, and applied to believers.*

Q. 1. How many ſorts of ſacraments are found in ſcripture?

A. Of ſacraments there are two ſorts, ſome extraordinary and tranſient, as the fiery pillar, manna, and water out of the rock; 1 Cor. x. 1, 2, 3, 4. Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye ſhould be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all paſſed through the ſea; and were all baptized unto Moſes in the cloud, and in the ſea; and did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat; and did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink; (for they drank of that ſpiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was Chriſt.) And ſome ordinary and ſtanding, as circumciſion and the paſſover, before Chriſt; and baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper, ſince Chriſt's death.

Q. 2. How many things are to be conſidered in every ſacrament?

A. In every ſacrament five things muſt be conſidered; (1.) The author. (2.) The parts. (3.) The union of thoſe parts. (4.) The ſubjects. (5.) The ends and uſes of it.

Q. 3. Who is is the author of the ſacraments?

A. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt as King of the church, by whoſe ſole authority baptiſm was inſtituted; Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt: Teaching them to obſerve all things, whatſoever I have commanded you, *&c.* And the Lord's ſupper; 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24. For I have received of the Lord that which alſo I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jeſus, the ſame night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and ſaid, take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you: This do in remembrance of me.

Q. 4. Are the old ſacraments yet in being and uſe in the church?

A. No, they are paſſed away, and the new come in their room. Baptiſm takes place of circumciſion; Col. ii. 11, 12. In whom alſo ye are circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh by the circumciſion of Chriſt; buried with him in baptiſm, *&c.* And the Lord's ſupper of the paſſover; 1 Cor. v. 7. Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened, for even Chriſt our paſſover is ſacrificed for us.

Q. 5. Of what parts doth every ſacrament conſiſt?

A. Every ſacrament conſiſts of two parts, one external and earthly; another internal and heavenly, or ſpiritual. Bread, wine, and water, are the external, Chriſt's blood and Spirit the internal parts; Rom. vi. 3. Know ye not, that ſo many of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his death? 1 Cor. xi. 25. This cup is the new teſtament in my blood, *&c.*

Q. 6. Wherein conſiſts the ſacramental union of thoſe parts?

A. It conſiſts, by virtue of Chriſt's inſtitution, in three things; (1.) In apt ſignification. (2.) Firm obſignation. And, (3.) Real exhibition of the bleſſings ſignified and ſealed.

Q. 7. What are the bleſſings ſignified by water in baptiſm?

A. It ſignifies our implantation into Chriſt, and communion with him in his death and reſurrection; Rom. vi. 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father; even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life. And our ſolemn admiſſion into the viſible church; Gal. iii. 26, 27, 28, 29. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Chriſt Jeſus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Chriſt, have put

on Chriſt. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: For ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus. And if ye be Chriſt's, then are ye Abraham's ſeed, and heirs according to the promiſe.

Q. 8. What are the bleſſings ſignified by bread and wine?

A. They ſignify Chriſt's body and blood, broken and pour'd out for us, with all the bleſſings of remiſſion, peace, and ſalvation, purchaſed by his blood; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. The cup of bleſſing which we bleſs, is it not the communion of the blood of Chriſt? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Chriſt? For we being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.

Q. 9. Do the ſacraments ſeal, as well as ſignify theſe things?

A. Yes, they do; Rom. iv. 11. And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith, &c. Their uſe is to confirm God's covenant with believers.

Q. 10. Who are the proper ſubjects of the ſacraments?

A. Believers, and their ſeed, are the ſubjects of baptiſm; but adult Chriſtians only of the Lord's ſupper; Acts ii. 38, 39. Repent, and be baptized every one of you; for the promiſe is unto you, and to your children, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call. 1 Cor. xi. 28. But let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

Q. 11. What is the main uſe and end of ſacraments?

A. It is to ratify and confirm God's covenant with believers; Rom. iv. 11. And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith which he had yet being uncircumciſed, &c. 1 Cor. xi. 26. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's death till he come.

Q. 12. What is the firſt inſtruction from hence?

A. That the abuſe of ſuch holy and ſolemn myſteries is a ſin of dreadful aggravation, and ſuch as God will puniſh; 1 Cor. xi. 27. Wherefore, whoſoever ſhall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, ſhall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Q. 13. What is the ſecond inſtruction?

A. Hence we learn the tender care and love of Chriſt over the church, in inſtituting ſuch uſeful and comfortable ordinances for us.

Of the Number of Sacraments.

Quest. 93. WHich are the sacraments of the New Testament?

A. *The sacraments of the New Testament are, baptism, and the Lord's supper.*

Q. 1. How many sacraments hath Christ appointed in the New Testament?

A. Christ hath appointed two, and no more; these being sufficient for our initiation and confirmation.

Q. 2. How many have the Papists added to them?

A. They have added five more; *viz.* Confirmation, penance, ordination, marriage, and extreme unction.

Q. 3. What is their sacrament of confirmation?

A. It is the anointing of the baptized with chrism in the fore-head, with this form of words; I sign thee with the sign of the cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost.

Q. 4. What is their ground for this practice?

A. The abuse of that Scripture, Heb. vi. 2. Of the doctrine of baptisms, and laying on of hands, *&c.* which, by a figurative speech, expresseth the whole standing ministry in the church, by laying on of hands.

Q. 5. What is their sacrament of pennance?

A. It is repentance manifested by outward signs, to which the word of absolution coming, makes it a sacrament, misgrounded on John xx. 23. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

Q. 6. What is their sacrament of orders, or ordination?

A. It is the laying on of hands in ordination of ministers, by which they conceive spiritual grace is given; by mistake of 2 Tim. i. 6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands.

Q. 7. What is their fourth superadded sacrament?

A. It is marriage, grounded upon those words of the apostle, Eph. v. 32. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Which only shews a similitude of our union with Christ, not an instituted sign to that end.

Q. 8. What is their fifth superadded sacrament?

A. Extreme unction, or anointing the sick, near death, with consecrated oil, grounded on Mark vi. 13. And anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them. And James

v. 14. Is any ſick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. Which are neither ſacramental rites, nor of ordinary ſtanding uſe in the church, but extraordinary, and temporary for that age.

Q. 9. What learn we hence?

A. Hence we learn, how apt men are to corrupt God's ordinances, by their ſuperſtitious additions; Matth. xv. 9. Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inſtruction hence?

A. How juſt and neceſſary our ſeparation from Rome is, who have groſsly corrupted God's ordinances, and left men no other remedy; Rev. xiii. 6. And he opened his mouth in blaſphemy againſt God, to blaſpheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

Q. 11. What is the third inſtruction?

A. That the reformation of religion is an invaluable mercy, a great deliverance from ſpiritual bondage; Rev. xi. 19. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was ſeen in his temple the ark of his teſtament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

Q. 12. What is the fourth inſtruction?

A. That Rome ſhall certainly fall, and all her adherents, for the horrid injury done by them to Chriſt, and the ſouls of men; Rev. xviii. 20, 21. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apoſtles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a ſtone like a great milſtone, and caſt it into the ſea, ſaying, Thus with violence ſhall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and ſhall be found no more at all.

Of Baptiſm.

Queſt. 94. WHat is baptiſm?

A. *Baptiſm is a ſacrament, wherein the waſhing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt, doth ſignify and ſeal our ingrafting into Chriſt, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.*

Q. 1. What is the external part of baptiſm?

A. It is pure unmixed water; Heb. x. 22. And our bodies waſhed with pure water. And therefore it is a vile practice of Papiſts, to add oil, ſalt, and ſpittle, to water, in baptiſm.

Q. 2. What doth water in baptiſm ſignify?

A. It ſignifies the blood of Chriſt; Rev. i. 5. Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood.

Q. 3. What is the firſt reſemblance it hath to Chriſt's blood?

A. In the freeneſs of it to all, it repreſents the unpurchaſed blood of Chriſt; Iſa. lv. 1. Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price.

Q. 4. What is the ſecond reſemblance to Chriſt's blood?

A. It reſembles it in its refreſhing quality; water refreſheth the thirſty, ſo doth Chriſt's blood; John vi. 35. He that believeth on me, ſhall never thirſt.

Q. 5. What is the third reſemblance it hath to Chriſt's blood?

A. The cleanſing property of water, ſhews the purifying virtue of Chriſt's blood; Heb. ix. 14. How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit, offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your conſcience from dead works, to ſerve the living God?

Q. 6. What is the fourth reſemblance it hath to Chriſt's blood?

A. It reſembles it in the neceſſity of it: For as the body cannot live without water, ſo neither can the ſoul without Chriſt's blood; Heb. ix. 23. It was therefore neceſſary that the patterns of things in the heavens ſhould be purified with theſe, but the heavenly things themſelves with better ſacrifices than theſe.

Q. 7. What is the fifth reſemblance of water to the blood of Chriſt?

A. As water neither refreſheth nor purifies the body without application; ſo neither doth Chriſt's blood refreſh or purify the ſoul till applied; 1 Cor. i. 30. But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.

Q. 8. Is it neceſſary to plunge the whole body under water, in baptizing every perſon?

A. The word [baptize] ſignifying as well to waſh, as to plunge; a perſon may be truly baptized, that is not plunged. And we cannot think, by the circumſtances of time and place, that the jailor, in the night, was carried to a river out of the city; Acts xvi. 33. And he took them the ſame hour of the night, and waſhed their ſtripes, and was baptized, he and all his ſtraightway.

Q. 9. But is it not ſaid, John iii. 23. That John alſo was

baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, becauſe there was much water there: and they came and were baptized?

A. The word ſignifies many waters, that is, ſprings of waters there; which are known by travellers to be ſmall, not capable of plunging into.

Q. 10. What are the benefits accruing to us by baptiſm?

A. The benefits are twofold: ſome external, called the fatneſs of the olive-tree; *i. e.* ordinances, and viſible membership; Rom. xi. 17. And thou being a wild olive-tree, wert graffed in amongſt them, and with them partakeſt of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree. And ſome ſpiritual and ſaving; 1 Pet. iii. 21. The like figure whereunto, even baptiſm, doth alſo now ſave us (not the putting away the filth of the fleſh, but the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God) by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. 11. What engagements are laid on the baptized?

A. They are engaged to be the Lord's people, and to walk ſuitably to that engagement; Rom. vi. 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death: that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life.

Q. 12. Is baptiſm to be reiterated, as the Lord's ſupper?

A. No; for the Lord's ſupper is a ſacrament for nouriſhing, but this for implantation; Rom. vi. 4, 5. Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into death: that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death, we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection.

Q. 13. Doth baptiſm regenerate men, and confer ſaving grace?

A. No, it doth not, in its own virtue, convey grace, no more than the Lord's ſupper; but the Spirit of God is the author of grace, and works it as he pleaſes, before or after baptiſm.

Of the Subjects of Baptiſm.

Queſt. 95. TO whom is baptiſm to be adminiſtered?

A. *Baptiſm is not to be adminiſtered to any that are out of the viſible church, till they profeſs their faith in Chriſt, and obedience to him; but the infants of ſuch as are members of the viſible church are to be baptized.*

Q. 1. Who are to be baptized?

A. Believers, and their infant-offspring; Acts ii. 39. For the

promiſe is to you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.

Q. 2. How doth it appear, that the infant-ſeed of believers ought to be baptized?

A. It appears by this, that they being Abraham's ſeed, were taken into covenant with God, and ordered to have the ſign of the covenant applied to them; and that grant was never reverſed; Gen. xvii. 7, 10. And I will eſtabliſh my covenant between me and thee, and thy ſeed after thee, in their generations, for an everlaſting covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy ſeed after thee. This is my covenant, which ye ſhall keep between me and you, and thy ſeed after thee; every man-child among you ſhall be circumciſed.

Q. 3. But was not that the covenant of works; and ſo will not hold, to infer their privilege under the covenant of grace?

A. No, it was not; for God never did, nor will become a God by way of ſpecial intereſt to any people, by virtue of the covenant of works, ſince the breach of it by the fall.

Q. 4. But if it were the covenant of grace, how doth it appear the right of believers infants is ſtill the ſame it was before in Abraham's time?

A. It appears plainly from the apoſtle's own words, and arguments; Acts ii. 39. For the promiſe is to you, and to your children, *&c.*

Q. 5. But though infants then were members of God's viſible church among the Jews, how doth it appear they are ſo now, when God hath caſt them off?

A. It appears, the membership and privileges are as free and complete to them now, that are the children of Gentile believers, as ever they were to the Jewiſh infants; Rom. xi. 17. And if ſome of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive-tree wert graffed in amongſt them, and with them partakeſt of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree.

Q. 6. How elſe doth it appear they are within the covenant?

A. It appears by this, that they are pronounced holy; 1 Cor. vii. 14. Elſe were your children unclean, but now are they holy. Which is a foederal holineſs, and none out of covenant can be holy by covenant.

Q. 7. But may not that place mean only their legitimacy?

A. No, it cannot; for then the apoſtle muſt pronounce all the infants in the world baſtards, that deſcend not at leaſt from one believing parent.

Q. 8. But infants are not capable to covenant with God, or

to perform covenant-duties; and therefore why ſhould they be admitted to covenant-privileges?

A. A child now of eight days old, is as capable of being admitted into covenant with God, as children of the ſame age were in Abraham's days; and then it is manifeſt they were admitted.

Q. 9. Though they were admitted by circumciſion then, will it follow, they may be ſo by baptiſm now, ſeeing that ordinance is aboliſhed?

A. Yes, it will: For though circumciſion ceaſe, yet baptiſm is come in its place; Col. ii. 10, 11, 12. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power. In whom alſo ye are circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, by the circumciſion of Chriſt, buried with him in baptiſm, *&c.*

Q. 10. But circumciſion was a ſeal of the covenant of works; and the argument will not hold, from a ſeal of the covenant of works, to a ſeal of the covenant of grace?

A. Circumciſion never was, nor was intended to be a ſeal of the covenant of works, but of the righteouſneſs of faith; Rom. iv. 11. And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith which he had yet being uncircumciſed, *&c.*

Q. 11. But have we no expreſs command in the New Teſtament to baptize infants?

A. There needed no new command; their privilege had been ſettled many ages before upon them, and never reverſed by Chriſt, or his apoſtles, but their former right declared to continue ſtill to them; Acts ii. 39. For the promiſe is to you and your children, *&c.*

Q. 12. But if they have a right, we might expect to find ſome examples of their baptizing?

A. It is manifeſt that believers houſholds were baptized with them; Acts xvi. 15, 33. And when ſhe was baptized, and her houſhold, *&c.* Ver. 33. And he took them the ſame hour of the night, and waſhed their ſtripes, and was baptized, he and all his ſtraightway. And if infants are not named, ſo neither are any of age, born of Chriſtian parents.

Q. 13. But many truſt to their infant-baptiſm, as to their regeneration, and ſo much miſchief is done?

A. They do ſo; yet the duty is not therefore to be neglected. The preaching of Chriſt is to ſome a ſtumbling-block; yet Chriſt muſt be preached for all that.

Q. 14. But many baptized infants prove naught?

A. And so do many baptized at age too. Duties are not to be measured by events.

Of the Lord's Supper.

Quest. 96. WHat is the Lord's supper?

A. *The Lord's supper is a sacrament, wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, his death is shewed forth; and the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their spiritual nourishment, and growth in grace.*

Q. 1. By whose authority is the Lord's supper instituted and appointed?

A. By the sovereign authority of Christ, the king of the church, and not by the pleasure of man; 1 Cor. xi. 23. For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you; that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread.

Q. 2. Of what parts doth this sacrament consist?

A. It consists of two parts; one earthly and visible, to wit, bread and wine; the other spiritual and invisible, the body and blood of Christ; 1 Cor. x. 16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

Q. 3. How doth these earthly and heavenly things become a sacrament?

A. By the word of institution, and blessing coming from Christ upon them; 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25. For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you; that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread. And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you: This do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood: This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

Q. 4. When did Christ ordain and institute this sacrament?

A. He instituted it in the same night he was betrayed; 1 Cor. xi. 23. The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread. It could not be sooner, because the passover must be first celebrated, and, by the institution of this, abrogated; nor later, for soon after he was apprehended.

Q. 5. What doth the time of its institution teach us?

A. It teaches us, how great Chriſt's care and love to his people is, that he makes in his ordinance ſuch proviſion for our comfort, though he knew his own bitter agony was juſt at hand.

Q. 6. What is the general uſe and end of this ſacrament?

A. It is to confirm, ſeal, and ratify the new covenant to believers; 1 Cor. xi. 35. This cup is the New Teſtament in my blood: This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

Q. 7. What are the particular ends, and uſes of it?

A. The firſt particular end and uſe of it, is, to bring Chriſt and his ſufferings afreſh to our remembrance; 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. This do in remembrance of me.

Q. 8. What kind of remembrance of Chriſt is here intended?

A. Not a mere ſpeculative, but an affectionate heart-melting remembrance of him; like that of Peter, Matth. xxvi. 75. And Peter remembered the words of Jeſus, which ſaid unto him, Before the cock ſhall crow, thou ſhalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly. Or of Joſeph, Gen. xliii. 29, 30. And Joſeph made haſte, for his bowels did yern upon his brother: And he ſought where to weep, and he entered into his chamber, and wept there.

Q. 9. What doth this end of the ſacrament imply?

A. It implies this; that the beſt of God's people are too apt to forget Chriſt, and what he hath endured and ſuffered for them.

Q. 10. What elſe doth it imply?

A. It implies this; that none but thoſe that have the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt, and have had former acquaintance with Chriſt, are fit for this ordinance; for no man can remember what he never knew; 1 Cor. xi. 28. But let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond particular uſe and end of this ſacrament?

A. It is to repreſent Chriſt to believers, as an apt ſign of him, and of his death; and that both memorative, ſignificative, and inſtructive.

Q. 12. How is it a memorative ſign of Chriſt?

A. It brings Chriſt to our remembrance, as his death and bitter ſufferings are therein repreſented to us, by the breaking of bread, and pouring forth of wine; 1 Cor. xi. 26. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew forth the Lord's death till he come.

Q. 13. How is it a ſignificative ordinance?

A. It is a ſignificative ordinance, not only as it repreſents Chriſt's ſufferings, but the believer's union with him as the Head, and with each other as members of his body; 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. The cup of bleſſing which we bleſs, is it not the communion of the blood of Chriſt? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Chriſt? For we being many, are one bread, and one body, *&c.*

Q. 14. In what reſpect is it an inſtructive ſign?

A. It is an inſtructive ſign in divers reſpects; namely, firſt, as it teaches us, that Chriſt is the only nutritive bread, by which our ſouls live; John vi. 51. I am the living bread, which came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread, he ſhall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is my fleſh, which I will give for the life of the world. And, *ſecondly*, as it inſtructs us, that the New Teſtament is now in its full force, by the death of Chriſt the Teſtator; Heb. ix. 16, 17. For where a teſtament is, there muſt alſo of neceſſity be the death of the Teſtator. For a teſtament is of force after men are dead; otherwiſe it is of no force at all, whilſt the Teſtator liveth.

Thus much of the Author, nature, and ends of the Lord's ſupper.

Of the Elements, Actions, and Subjects of it.

Queſt. 1. ARE not bread and wine too ſmall and common things, to repreſent the body and blood of Chriſt?

A. Though a bit of bread, and a draught of wine, be things of ſmall value in themſelves; yet they are great in reſpect of their uſe and end. A pennyworth of wax is a ſmall thing in itſelf, but being applied to the label of a deed, may be advanced to the worth of thouſands of pounds, as it receives the ſeal to a great inheritance.

Q. 2. Is not the bread in the ſacrament turned into the very body of Chriſt itſelf, by tranſubſtantiation?

A. No, it is not; but the elements retain ſtill their own proper nature of bread and wine, after the words of conſecration; and are ſo called; 1 Cor. xi. 26. For as often as ye eat this bread, *&c.* Matth. xxvi. 29. But I ſay unto you, I will not henceforth drink of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Q. 3. What is the firſt argument, by which Proteſtants confute the Popiſh doctrine of tranſubſtantiation?

A. The firſt argument againſt it, is taken from the end of the ſacrament; which is, to bring Chriſt's body and blood

to our remembrance; 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. This do in remembrance of me. Now ſigns for remembrance, are of things abſent, not preſent.

Q. 4. What is the ſecond argument?

A. Becauſe the language in which our Saviour ſpake, had no other property of expreſſion; there being no other word for ſignify, but is inſtead thereof, as is manifeſt in both Teſtaments; Gen. xli. 27. And the ſeven ill-favoured kine, that came up after them, are ſeven years of famine. Rev. i. 20. The ſeven ſtars, are the angels of the ſeven churches; and the ſeven candleſticks which thou ſaweſt, are the ſeven churches.

Q. 5. What is the third argument againſt tranſubſtantiation?

A. The manifold groſs abſurdities, that naturally and neceſſarily follow on this doctrine, ſhew the falſeneſs of it, and that it is juſtly rejected and abhorred by all ſound Chriſtians.

Q. 6. What is the firſt abſurdity that follows it?

A. This doctrine allows that to a filly prieſt, which is not to be allowed to all the angels in heaven. It allows him power to make his Maker, and eat his God; and in juſtifying this by the omnipotency of God, they ſay no more, than what a Turk may ſay to juſtify the moſt ridiculous fooleries of the Alcoran.

Q. 7. What is the ſecond abſurdity of tranſubſtantiation?

A. The ſecond abſurdity is this, that it denies the truth of the teſtimony given by the ſenſes of all men, that it is real bread, and real wine, after conſecration, and not fleſh and blood. And if the teſtimony of ſenſe be not certain, then the being of God cannot be proved by the things that are made; contrary to Rom. i. 20. For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, *&c.* Nor the truth of Chriſt's reſurrection, by ſeeing and feeling; contrary to Luke xxiv. 39. Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myſelf; handle me, and ſee, *&c.*

Q. 8. What is the third abſurdity of tranſubſtantiation?

A. The third abſurdity is this, that in affirming the accidents of bread and wine to remain, and their ſubſtance to vaniſh; they affirm, that there is length, breadth, thickneſs, moiſture, and ſweetneſs; and yet nothing long, broad, thick, moiſt, or ſweet; which is a perfect contradiction.

Q. 9. What is the fourth abſurdity of tranſubſtantiation?

A. It implies, that the entire living body of Chriſt ſat

the table, and at the ſame time was dead, and in the diſciples mouths and ſtomachs in the firſt ſacrament; and that in all after-ſacraments it is wholly in heaven, and wholly in as many thouſand places in the world, as there are ſacraments adminiſtered.

Q. 10. What doth the breaking of this bread, and pouring out of wine in the ſacrament, ſignify?

A. It ſignifies the violent painful death, and bitter ſufferings of Chriſt for us; 1 Cor xi. 26. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's death till he come.

Q. 11. What doth the giving and taking of the ſacramental bread and wine ſignify?

A. Theſe actions ſignify God's exhibiting, and the believers applying of Chriſt, and all his benefits, to their ſouls.

Q. 12. Who are fit ſubjects to receive the Lord's ſupper?

A. None that are groſsly ignorant, ſcandalous, or unbelievers in their natural ſtate, for ſuch cannot examine themſelves, as the word requires; 1 Cor. xi. 28. But let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. But do eat and drink judgment to themſelves; 1 Cor. xi. 29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himſelf, not diſcerning the Lord's body.

Q. 13. Are morally honeſt and ſober perſons qualified for this ſacrament?

A. No; civility and morality do not qualify perſons, they are not the wedding-garment; but regenerating grace and faith doth, in the ſmalleſt meaſure; Matth. xxii. 12. And he ſaith unto him, Friend, how cameſt thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment? *&c.* 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. The cup of bleſſing which we bleſs, is it not the communion of the blood of Chriſt? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Chriſt? For we being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.

Of the Duties of Communicants.

Queſt. 97. What is required to the worthy receiving of the Lord's ſupper?

A. *It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's ſupper, that they examine themſelves of their knowledge to diſcern the Lord's body; of their faith to feed upon him; of their repentance, love, and new obedience; leſt coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themſelves.*

Q. 1. What are the duties of worthy receivers?

A. There are three sorts of duties incumbent on them; some antecedent to it, some concomitant of it, and some subsequent to it.

Q. 2. What are the antecedent duties to it?

A. They are two: (1.) Examination of their graces. (2.) Preparation of their souls. Examination of their graces; 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. And preparation of their souls; 1 Cor. v. 8. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Q. 3. What is the first grace to be tried?

A. Our saving knowledge of God in Christ, without which we cannot discern the Lord's body; 1 Cor. xi. 29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

Q. 4. What are we to enquire of, touching our knowledge of God in Christ?

A. We are to examine whether it be competent for quantity, and savingly operative and influential on the heart and life, for quality; Hosea iv. 6. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, *&c.* 1 Cor. xiii. 1. Though I speak with the tongues of men, and of angels, and have not charity; I am become as a sounding brass, or tinkling cymbal.

Q. 5. When is knowledge competent, and influential?

A. When we truly understand, by the teachings of the Father, the sin and misery of the fall, the nature and necessity of Christ, and, under these convictions, come to him in the way of faith; John vi. 45.——Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. And subject ourselves to him in sincere obedience; Matth. xi. 28, 29. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Q. 6. What are we to examine ourselves about, besides knowledge?

A. We are obliged to examine ourselves about our faith, whether we have it in any saving degree; 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: Prove your-

ſelves, *&c.* For without faith we cannot pleaſe God; Heb. xi. 6. But without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, *&c.* Nor enjoy ſpiritual communion with Chriſt; Eph. iii. 17. That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, *&c.*

Q. 7. What other grace muſt be examined, and ſought for?

A. We muſt examine our love to Chriſt, and all that are his; becauſe no gifts ſignify any thing without love; 1 Cor. xiii. 2. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and underſtand all myſteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, ſo that I could remove mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.

Q. 8. What elſe muſt worthy receivers examine themſelves about?

A. The ſincerity of their hearts, evidenced by their obedience; without which, they cannot worthily approach the table; 1 Cor. v. 8. Therefore let us keep the feaſt, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedneſs, but with the unleavened bread of ſincerity and truth.

Q. 9. But if, upon examination, we are in doubts about our faith and ſincerity, muſt we forbear?

A. If our doubts ariſe from the weakneſs, and not the total want of grace, ſuch doubts ſhould not hinder us; Rom. xiv. 1. Him that is weak in the faith, receive you, *&c.*

Q. 10. What is the danger of coming to the Lord's table without theſe graces?

A. The danger is exceeding great both to ſoul and body. (1.) To the ſoul; 1 Cor. xi. 29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himſelf, *&c.* And to the body; 1 Cor. xi 30. For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep.

Q. 11. What are the duties of worthy receivers at the Lord's table?

A. Their duties at the table are, to diſcern Chriſt by the eye of faith; under thoſe ſigns of his body and blood; 1 Cor. xi. 29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himſelf, not diſcerning the Lord's body. On the diſcovery of him, to mourn bitterly for ſin; Zech. xii. 10.---And they ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born. And to excite all their graces into vigorous acts, for the applying Chriſt to themſelves; Cant. iv. 16. Awake, O north-wind, and come, thou ſouth, blow

upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out, &c.

Q. 12. What is the duty of worthy receivers, after the ſacrament?

A. Their duty is, heartily to bleſs God for Chriſt, and the benefits of his blood, Matth. xxvi. 30. And when they had ſung an hymn, they went out into the mount of olives. To double their care and watchfulneſs againſt ſin; Eph. iv. 30. And grieve not the holy Spirit, whereby ye are ſealed to the day of redemption. And to grow more fruitful in all ſpiritual obedience; Col. i. 10. That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing; being fruitful in every good work, and increaſing in the knowledge of God.

Q. 13. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That the abuſe and profanation of this ordinance, either by coming to it for carnal ends, or being forced upon it by fear of ſufferings, or approaching to it without due qualifications, is a dreadful ſin, which God will terribly avenge; Mat. xxii. 11, 12, 13. And when the King came in to ſee the gueſts, he ſaw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment. And he ſaith unto him, Friend, how cameſt thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? And he was ſpeechleſs. Then ſaid the king unto the ſervants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and caſt him into outer darkneſs: There ſhall be weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth.

Q. 14. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. That great and manifold are the bleſſings and advantages which Chriſtians duly prepared may reap by this ordinance.

Of Prayer.

Queſt. 98. WHat is prayer?

A. *Prayer is an offering up of our deſire unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Chriſt, with confeſſion of our ſins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.*

Q. 1. Who is the proper, and only object of prayer?

A. God only is the proper object of prayer; it is a part of his natural worſhip, therefore it is peculiarly his honour and prerogative, and none elſe can hear and anſwer them but God; Pſalm lxv. 2. O thou that heareſt prayer, unto thee ſhall all fleſh come.

Q. 2. Through whom, or in whoſe name, are our prayers to be directed to God?

A. Our prayers are to be directed to God only through Chriſt, and his name; and not by the mediation of angels or

saints; Col. ii. 18. Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels. For the merit and satisfaction of Christ alone give success and acceptance to our prayers; Rev. viii. 3, 4. And another angel came, and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar, which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, out of the angel's hand. 1 Tim. ii. 5. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

Q. 3. What is the first property, or quality of acceptable prayer?

A. No prayer can be acceptable to God, except the matter of it be agreeable to his will; James iv. 3. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts; 1 John v. 14, 15. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desire of him.

Q. 4. Is it enough to make prayer acceptable, that the matter is agreeable to God's will?

A. No, it is not; for the manner, as well as the matter, must be so too; Psalm lxvi. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

Q. 5. What is the first qualification of an acceptable prayer, respecting the manner of it?

A. That it be sincere, and flowing from the heart of a regenerate person; Prov. xv. 29. The Lord is far from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous. Jer. xxix. 13. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Q. 6. What is the second qualification of prayer, respecting the manner?

A. It must be performed in the heart of a child of God, by the Spirit of adoption; Gal. iv. 6. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Rom. viii. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Q. 7. What is the third qualification of an acceptable prayer, respecting the manner?

A. It must be fervent and importunate, not cold and formal,

James v. 16.—The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much; Matth. vii. 7. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Q. 8. Wherein doth true importunity with God in prayer consist?

A. Not in the multitude of words; Matth. vi. 7. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the Heathen do: for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. But in an holy earnestness of spirit to be heard; Psalm cxliii. 7. Hear me speedily, O Lord, my spirit faileth; hide not thy face from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. A prudent choice of prevalent arguments; Job xxiii. 4. I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. And a resolute persistance in our requests, till they be granted; Isa. lxii. 7. And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

Q. 9. Do not prayers thus qualified sometimes miscarry?

A. God may delay and suspend the answer of them for a time; Psalm xxii. 2. O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou hearest not, *&c.* But sooner or later God will always answer them, either in the very thing we ask; 1 John v. 15.—We know that we have the petitions that we desired of him: Or in that which is equivalent, or better; Gen. xvii. 18, 19. And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him, for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

Q. 10 Is there no prayer but what is stated and fixed?

A. Yes, there is sudden occasional prayer, which we call ejaculatory. Such was Jacob's, Gen. xlix. 18. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord. And this is exceeding useful, to maintain constant communion with God, and keep the heart in a spiritual frame.

Q. 11. Is all stated and fixed prayer public in the congregation, or church?

A. No; stated prayer ought to be in our families, with those under our charge; and in our closets, betwi: God and us alone; Josh. xxiv. 15.——But as for me, and my house, we will serve the Lord. And Matth. vi. 6. But when thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Q. 12. What do you infer from hence?

A. That the reſtraint of prayer is not only a great ſin, but an ill ſign of a graceleſs heart; Job vi. 4. Yea, thou caſteſt off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer before God. And that which entails a judgment and curſe upon men, and their families; Jer. x. 25. Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name.

Q. 13. What is the ſecond inference from the ordinance of prayer?

A. That the true reaſon why we enjoy not the mercies we pray for, is not becauſe God is unwilling to grant mercies, but becauſe we either neglect prayer, or miſcarry in the manner of prayer; James iv. 2, 3. Ye luſt, and have not; ye kill, and deſire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, becauſe ye aſk not. Ye aſk, and receive not, becauſe ye aſk amiſs, that ye may conſume it upon your luſts.

Of Direction in Prayer.

Queſt. 99. WHat rule hath God given for our direction in the duty of prayer?

A. *The whole word of God is of uſe to direct us in prayer; but the ſpecial rule of direction, is that form of prayer which Chriſt taught his diſciples, commonly called, The Lord's prayer.*

Q. 1. Do men need directions, rules, and helps in prayer?

A. They do greatly need them, for in, and of ourſelves we know not what to pray for as we ought; Rom. viii. 26. Likewiſe the Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, *&c.* Nor how to pray in a right manner, and for right ends; and a miſtake in either fruſtrates our prayer; James iv. 3. Ye aſk, and receive not, becauſe ye aſk amiſs, that ye may conſume it upon your luſts.

Q. 2. When do men miſtake in the matter of their prayer?

A. They miſtake in the matter of prayer, when they aſk of God things that are not lawful, good and agreeable to his will. So the diſciples were ready to do, in calling for fire from heaven on the Samaritans; Luke ix. 54, 55. And when his diſciples, James and John, ſaw this, they ſaid, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and conſume them, even as Elias did? But he turned and rebuked them, and ſaid, Ye know not what manner of ſpirit ye are of.

Q. 3. When do men miſtake in the manner of prayer?

A. They miſtake in the manner, when they aſk mercies of God for carnal ends, to ſatisfy their luſts; James iv. 3. Ye aſk, and receive not, becauſe ye aſk amiſs, that ye may conſume it

upon your luſts. Or in a drowſy and careleſs manner; Iſa. lxiv. 7. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee, *&c.*

Q. 4. What helps hath God afforded us to furniſh us to prayer, both in reſpect of the matter and manner?

A. The ſcriptures abundantly furniſh us with all ſorts of helps and directions for the matter of prayer. It directs us, both in confeſſion of ſins, original and actual; Pſalm li. 4, 5. Behold, I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me. Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight, *&c.* Petition and thankſgiving; Phil. iv. 6. Be careful for nothing, but in every thing, by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving, let your requeſts be made known unto God.

Q. 5. Doth it afford us any help, or direction, as to the manner of prayer alſo?

A. Yes, it doth; and that both as to, (1.) Our ſincerity in prayer; Heb. x. 22. Let us draw near with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith; having our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and our bodies waſhed with pure water. (2.) As to our humility in prayer; Pſalm x. 17. Lord thou haſt heard the deſire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cauſe thine ear to hear. (3.) As to our faith in prayer; James i. 6. But let him aſk in faith, nothing wavering, *&c.* (4.) As to our fervency in prayer; James v. 6. ——The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Q. 6. Are theſe external rules and directions ſufficient in themſelves to enable us to pray acceptably?

A. In reſpect of external direction they are ſufficient, and we need no other outward rules than what the ſcriptures furniſh; but beſides that, the internal helps and aſſiſtances of the Spirit, are neceſſary to the offering up acceptable prayer; Rom. viii. 26. Likewiſe the Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itſelf maketh interceſſion for us, *&c.*

Q. 7. But doth the ſcripture only furniſh us with general rules of direction for prayer?

A. No, it furniſhes us alſo with an excellent pattern and example of prayer, compoſed by Chriſt for our direction; Matth. vi. 9. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven, *&c.*

Q. 8. Are Chriſtians tied by a neceſſity to uſe that form of words? Or was it only intended for a directory to them?

A. That form of words may be lawfully uſed, but it is plain its intention was to regulate our petitions by it; and therefore they that uſe it in ſpells and charms, as the Papiſts; or thoſe that think nothing is prayer, but that form of words; abuſe Chriſt's intention in it.

Q. 9. How doth it appear, it was not Chriſt's intention ſtrictly to bind us to that very form of words in our prayers?

A. Divines give us theſe reaſons againſt it, (1.) Becauſe this prayer is ſet down diverſly by the evangeliſts; Matth. vi. 10, 12. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And Luke xi. 3, 4. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our ſins; for we alſo forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. (2.) Chriſt and his apoſtles did not always uſe this form of words afterwards, as appears by his prayer at Lazarus's grave, John xi. and that for his apoſtles, John xvii. (3.) Becauſe theſe words, Matth. vi. 9. After this manner, *&c.* plainly ſhew, its uſe was intended for a directory to us.

Q. 10. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. Hence we learn the fulneſs and completeneſs of the Scriptures, not only for the guiding and ſettling of our faith in things that are to be believed, but alſo of our whole practice, in every duty we are to perform.

Q. 11. What is the ſecond inference hence?

A. Hence we are informed, how neceſſary it is to acquaint ourſelves with the mind of God, revealed in his word, that we may guide ourſelves in prayer, both for matter and manner thereby; and not utter to God words without knowledge.

Q. 12. What is the laſt inference from hence?

A. That thoſe who neglect all prayer, and thoſe that ſatisfy themſelves with a form of prayer, which they utter without knowledge or affection, do greatly ſin againſt God. And that it is the duty of all Chriſtians, from a ſenſe of their own ſins, wants, and mercies, to be often with God in prayer, guiding themſelves in that ſpiritual duty, by ſuch inward and outward helps, as his word and Spirit are able to furniſh them with.

Of the Preface to the Lord's Prayer.

Queſt. 100. WHat doth the preface of the Lord's prayer teach us?

A. *The preface of the Lord's prayer, which is,* [Our Father which art in heaven,] *teacheth us to draw near to God with all*

holy reverence and confidence, as children to a Father, able and ready to help us: and that we should pray with and for others.

Q. 1. What doth the word Father import in this preface?

A. It imports the Spirit of adoption to be the principle of all acceptable prayers; Gal. iv. 6. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Q. 2. What is the first benefit, or help we have in prayer, from the Spirit of adoption?

A. He excites our spirits to seek God in prayer; Psal. xxvii. 8. When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.

Q. 3. What is the second assistance he gives us in prayer?

A. He indites and suggests suitable and acceptable matter to us in prayer; Rom. viii. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, *&c.*

Q. 4. What is the third benefit we have by him in prayer?

A. He fills our souls with spiritual and holy affections in prayer, and helps us to act his graces in our duties; Rom. viii. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Q. 5. What else doth this word Father import?

A. It imports that holy confidence which believers may, and ought to draw near to God withal, as children to a Father; Eph. iii. 12. In whom we have boldness and access, with confidence, by the faith of him.

Q. 6. Doth it only signify our relation and confidence?

A. No, it also signifies the reverential fear of God, which ought at all times to be on our hearts, especially in prayer; Mal. i. 6. A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master; If then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?

Q. 7. What is further imported in this word Father?

A. It imports God's willingness and readiness to grant the best mercies to his people that seek them duly at his hand; Matth. vii. 11. If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Q. 8. Why is he here called our Father?

A. To signify to us, that it is not only our duty to pray

ſecretly by and for ourſelves, but alſo with and for others; Eph. vi. 18. Praying always, with all prayer and ſupplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perſeverance, and ſupplication for all ſaints.

Q. 9. Why is God ſaid here to be in heaven?

A. It is to note his ſovereign power and dominion over all, as a ground-work of faith in prayer.

Q. 10. What elſe doth it import?

A. The great diſtance between God and us, which ſhould fill our hearts with an holy awe of him; Eccleſ. v. 2.------- God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.

Q. 11. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. It ſhews us, what a ſad caſe all thoſe are in, that have no ſpecial intereſt in God as a Father.

Q. 12. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. It ſhews us what a glorious privilege the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath purchaſed for, and ſettled on his people; Heb. iv. 15, 16. For we have not an high-prieſt, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without ſin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Q. 13. What is the laſt inference from hence?

A. That ſeeing believers have a Father in heaven, they ſhould never fear wants while they live, nor be afraid to die, ſince death brings them to heaven, their Father's houſe.

Of ſanctifying God's Name.

Queſt. 101. WHat do we pray for in the firſt petition?

A. *In the firſt petition, which is,* [Hallowed be thy name,] *we pray, that God would enable us, and others, to glorify him in all that whereby he maketh himſelf known, and that he would diſpoſe all things to his own glory.*

Q. 1. Is there any word full enough, perfectly to expreſs what God is?

A. No, his name is ſecret; Judges xiii. 18. And the angel of the Lord ſaid unto him, Why aſkeſt thou thus after my name, ſeeing it is ſecret? A name which none can tell; Prov. xxx. 4.——What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canſt tell? A name above every name; Phil. ii. 9. Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. But the name by which he more eſpecially manifeſts himſelf, is the name I AM;

Exod. iii. 14. And God ſaid unto Moſes, I AM THAT I AM: And he ſaid, Thus ſhalt thou ſay unto the children of Iſrael, I AM hath ſent me unto you.

Q. 2. What doth the name of God, I AM, ſignify to us?

A. It ſignifies to us, firſt, The reality of his being, in oppoſition to idols, which are but imaginary and fantaſtic things; 1 Cor. viii. 4.——We know that an idol is nothing in the world, *&c.* God is not only the moſt perfect being, but the root of all other beings.

Q. 3. What elſe doth this name I AM import?

A. It imports both the perfection and eternity of God's being. I AM implies, he hath not that now, which he had not formerly; and that he ſhall not afterwards have, what he hath not now: and that there is neither beginning, end, or ſucceſſion with God, whoſe name is I AM.

Q. 4. But what are we here to underſtand by the name of God?

A. All thoſe things are here intended, by which he manifeſts himſelf to the creature; as his word, works, and ordinances, but eſpecially his glorious attributes; Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6.—— The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth.

Q. 5. What is it to hallow, or ſanctify his name?

A. Not to infuſe any holineſs into him, which he had not before; ſo he ſanctifies us; but to manifeſt and acknowledge the holineſs of God; Iſa. xxix. 23. But when he ſeeth his children, the work of my hands in the midſt of him, they ſhall ſanctify my name, and ſanctify the holy One of Jacob, and ſhall fear the God of Iſrael.

Q. 6. Why hallowed or ſanctified, rather than glorified? Why that word, rather than this?

A. Becauſe his holineſs is the beauty and luſtre of his other attributes. His greatneſs appears in his holineſs; Iſa. xii. 6.— Great is the holy One of Iſrael in the midſt of thee. So doth his power; Luke i. 49. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is his name. And therefore his holineſs is that attribute, which angels ſingle out eſpecially to celebrate; Iſa. vi. 3. And one cried unto another, and ſaid, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hoſts, *&c.* And ſo do men alſo, as it is the cauſe why they ſhould glorify him; Exod. xv. 11.——Who is like thee, glorious in holineſs, *&c.*

Q. 7. What is the firſt thing we are to intend in this petition?

A. The meaning is, that God would ſo diſpoſe and order all things in the world, as may beſt promote and advance the glory of his name; on which account we may pray for the

defeat of God's enemies; Pſalm lxxxiii. 16, 17, 18. Fill their faces with ſhame, that they may ſeek thy name, O Lord. Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to ſhame, and periſh; that men may know that thou, whoſe name alone is Jehovah, art the moſt High over all the earth. And the deliverance of his church and people; Pſalm lxxix. 9. Help us, O God of our ſalvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our ſins for thy name's ſake.

Q. 8. What is the ſecond thing we are to intend in it?

A. That God would fit us for, and uſe us in the moſt ſerviceable capacity for the glorifying of his name; Pſalm lxvii. 1, 2, 3. God be merciful unto us, and bleſs us, and cauſe his face to ſhine upon us: That thy way may be known upon earth, thy ſaving health among all nations. Let the people praiſe thee, O God, let all the people praiſe thee.

Q. 9. What is the third thing intended in this petition?

A. That God may not only glorify his own name, and uſe us to glorify it, but that it ſhould be our endeavour and joy to have it glorified by others all the world over; Pſalm cxlv. 4, 5, 6. One generation ſhall praiſe thy works to another, and ſhall declare thy mighty acts. I will ſpeak of the glorious honour of thy majeſty, and of thy wondrous works. And men ſhall ſpeak of the might of thy terrible acts; and I will declare thy greatneſs.

Q. 10. Why muſt our hearts be ſo intently ſet upon the ſanctification of God's name?

A. Becauſe this is the ultimate end of our own, and every other being; Rom. xi. 36. For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever, Amen. And the particular end of God in our effectual calling; 1 Pet. ii. 9. But ye are a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes of him who hath called you out of darkneſs into his marvellous light.

Q. 11. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That the diſhonour of God's name muſt needs be a cutting affliction to a gracious ſoul; Pſalm xlii. 10. As with a ſword in my bones my enemies reproach me; while they ſay daily unto me, Where is thy God?

Q. 12. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. That it is a dreadful infatuation, and ſpiritual judgment upon thoſe men that think they glorify God in doing thoſe things which his ſoul hateth; Iſa. lxvi. 5. Hear the word of

the Lord, ye that tremble at his word: Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: But he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. And John xvi. 2. They shall put you out of the synagogues: Yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.

Q. 13. What is the third inference from hence?

A. That it should be indifferent to a Christian what condition God puts him into, so that he may but be useful to sanctify and exalt the name of God therein; Phil. i. 20.—As always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.

Q. 14. What is the last inference hence?

A. That it is an high and dreadful provocation of God to prophane and abuse his worship, whereon his name is called, and wherein it is to be sanctified; Lev. x. 1, 2, 3. And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said unto Aaron, this it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people will I be glorified.

Of God's Kingdom.

Quest. 102. WHat do we pray for in the second petition?

A. *In the second petition, which is,* [Thy kingdom come,] *we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it, and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.*

Q. 1. What is the first thing signified by the kingdom of God here?

A. The gospel is here intended by the kingdom of God, Matth. xiii. 47.——Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind.

Q. 2. What is the thing signified by the coming of this kingdom of God?

A. It signifies the removal of all impediments, that hinder its propagation in the world; 2 Thess. iii. 1. Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.

Q. 3. Who, and what hinders the propagation of it?

A. Antichriſt, that man of ſin, hinders it externally; 2 Theſſ. ii. 4. Who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped; ſo that he as God ſitteth in the temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God. The devil and mens luſts internally; 1 Theſſ. ii. 18. Wherefore we would have come unto you (even I Paul) once and again; but Satan hindered us. Luke xix. 14. But his citizens hated him, and ſent a meſſenger after him, ſaying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

Q. 4. What then is the deſire of all good men, with reſpect to the coming of the goſpel kingdom?

A. That all nations may be brought to Chriſt by the preaching of it, and ſo Chriſt's kingdom be greatly exalted and enlarged; Iſa. ii. 2. And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt days, that the mountain of the Lord's houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the mountains, and ſhall be exalted above the hills; and all nations ſhall flow unto it.

Q. 5. What is the ſecond thing here meant by the kingdom of God?

A. It ſignifies and intends the work of ſaving grace wrought in mens ſouls; Luke xvii. 21.——Behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Q. 6. Why is this work of grace called the kingdom of God?

A. Becauſe where-ever ſaving grace comes, it ſubdues the ſoul to Chriſt's ſceptre; 2 Cor. x. 5. Caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.

Q. 7. Wherein conſiſts the kingdom of grace?

A. It conſiſts not in external rites and obſervances, but in righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt; Rom. xiv. 17. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt

Q. 8. What do we aſk of God in this petition, with reſpect to this kingdom of grace?

A. Herein we deſire not only our own perſonal progreſſive ſanctification, but the ſanctification of others all the world over; Acts xxvi. 29. And Paul ſaid, I would to God that not only thou, but alſo all that hear me this day, were both almoſt, and altogether ſuch as I am, except theſe bonds.

Q. 9. What is the third thing here meant by the kingdom of God?

A. By it is here meant the future ſtate of glory and bleſſed-

neſs; 1 Cor. xv. 50. Now this I ſay, brethren, that fleſh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, *&c.*

Q. 10. Why is the heavenly ſtate called the kingdom of God?

A. This is called the kingdom of God, becauſe in that ſtate God reigns over his people glorioufly, there being no rebellion in them in the leaſt degree; Luke xx. 36.—For they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the reſurrection. And they reign with Chriſt; Rev. iii. 21. To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my throne, *&c.*

Q. 11. What do we deſire in prayer for the coming of this kingdom?

A. We deſire not only our preſervation in our paſſage to that ſtate of glory; 1 Pet. v. 10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Chriſt Jeſus, after that ye have ſuffered a while, make you perfect, ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you. But the haſtening of it to ourſelves and others; Rev. xxii. 20.—Amen, even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.

Q. 12. What is the firſt inſtruction hence?

A. That the goſpel is an invaluable mercy, as it is the inſtrument of bringing us into Chriſt's gracious and glorious kingdom; Acts xxvi. 18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified by faith that is in me.

Q. 13. What is the ſecond inference from hence?

A. That many men really hate and oppoſe the very thing they pray for.

Q. 14. What is the laſt inſtruction hence?

A. That how firmly ſoever Satan's and Antichriſt's kingdom ſeem to be founded in the world, they muſt and ſhall fall before the daily prayers of the ſaints.

Concerning the doing of God's Will.

Queſt. 103. WHat do we pray for in the third petition?

A. *In the third petition, which is,* [Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven], *we pray, that God, by his grace, would make us able and willing to know, obey, and ſubmit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.*

Q. 1. What will of God is here intended?

A. Not the will of his decree; for that is in himſelf alone; 1 Cor. ii. 11. The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

Q. 2. What will then is here meant?

A. The will of his providence may be here meant; Pſalm cxxv. 6. Whatſoever the Lord pleaſed, that did he in heaven, and in earth, and in the ſeas, and all deep places. And Pſalm cxix. 89. For ever, O Lord, thy word is ſettled in heaven. Ver. 91. They continue this day according to thine ordinances; for all are thy ſervants.

Q. 3. How are we to underſtand the doing of this will of providence in heaven?

A. (1.) As it is done by the ſun, moon, and ſtars; Pſalm cxix. 89. Thy word is ſettled in heaven. Ver. 91. They continue this day according to thine ordinances. Pſalm xix. 6. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it; and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. (2.) As it is done by angels; Pſalm civ. 4. Who maketh the angels ſpirits, his miniſters a flaming fire. Heb. i. 14. Are they not all miniſtering ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation?

Q. 4. How do theſe perform the will of God's providence?

A. (1.) The heavenly bodies do it evenly, conſtantly, and unweariedly; Pſalm civ. 19. He appointeth the moon for ſeaſons, the ſun knoweth his going down. (2.) The angels do it ſpeedily, voluntarily, chearfully, and ſo knowingly; Pſalm ciii. 21. Ye miniſters of his, that do his pleaſure.

Q. 5. Muſt we be agents in this providential will?

A. Yes, we muſt; Acts xiii. 36. For David, after he had ſerved his generation by the will of God, fell on ſleep.

Q. 6. How muſt we do it?

A. By employing our abilities, faculties, and intereſts, in the duties of our particular callings, and by moving conſtantly, prudently, and vigorouſly in our own ſphere, and ſo imitate thoſe in heaven.

Q. 7. Why do we pray that God's will of providence may be done by us?

A. Becauſe we are his creatures, and the moſt noble inſtruments of the inferior world; and therefore we ſhould be willing to be acted by him, and active for him; and becauſe this will of providence is always juſt, good, and true, and for his own glory; Pſalm cxlv. 17. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. Pſalm cxix. 89. For ever, O Lord, thy word is ſettled in heaven. Ver. 91. They continue this day according to thine ordinances; for all are thy ſervants.

Q. 8. What other will of God is here meant?

A. The will of his precepts, and this is chiefly intended.

Q. 9. And how is this will of God done in heaven?

A. By the angels it is done universally, chearfully, constantly, humbly, thankfully, loyally, readily; Psalm ciii. 20. Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. And so it is done by the saints in heaven; Rev. vii. 15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; And chap. xxii. 3. And his servants shall serve him.

Q. 10. Do we pray then that we may thus do the will of God?

A. Yes; for tho' we cannot perfectly without sin do it, yet that is our duty; Mat. v. *ult.* Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. And in all other particulars we may and we must imitate them herein; Psalm cxix. 6. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. Verse 14. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies as much as in all riches Verse 60. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments. Verse 112, *&c.* I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always even unto the end.

Q. 11. How must we know God's will?

A. Not notionally and rationally only, but spiritually also; 1 Cor. ii. 14. They are spiritually discerned.

Q. 12. Why is knowing God's will placed here before doing it, *&c.*?

A. Because the understanding is the leading faculty, without which it is impossible there should be any obedience; Prov. xix. 2. Also that the soul be without knowledge it is not good. Jer. v. 4. Therefore I said, Surely these are poor, they are foolish; for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God.

Q. 13. Why pray we to God for this knowledge; can we not know it of ourselves?

A. No, it is the special gift and grace of God; Gal. i. 15, 16. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. Eph. i. 17, 19. That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.——And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. Eph. v. 8. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.

Q. 14. Why do we pray that we may obey; can we not do it of our own free-will when we know it?

A. No, for our wills are ſtubborn and rebellious againſt God's commands, as well as our minds ignorant of them; Rom. viii. 7. Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. Then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean; from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols, will I cleanſe you. A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you; and I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh. Phil. ii. 13. For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.

Q. 15. What is meant by ſubmitting to God's will?

A. (1.) Either a voluntary ſubjection of ſoul, and a preparedneſs actually to do his will: Or, (2.) A voluntary and ſilent ſubmiſſion to his will of providence in affliction: but in this particular we cannot imitate thoſe in heaven, becauſe no croſs ever befals them.

Q. 16. Why is will added in all things?

A. Becauſe partial obedience is no obedience; he that does not obey God in every thing, obeys him in nothing; Jam. ii. 10. For whoſoever ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

Q. 17. Why do we pray that God by his grace would work this will in us, and by us?

A. Becauſe it is free grace that determines it; 2 Tim. i. 9. Who hath ſaved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpoſe and grace, which was given us in Chriſt Jeſus, before the world began. And efficacious grace that works it in us, and enables us to do it; Eph. v. 8. For ye were ſometimes darkneſs, but now are ye light in the Lord. Verſe 10. Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Q. 18. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That it is man's glory and felicity to be conformed to the will of God; Prov. xii. 26. The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour. Pſal. xix. 10, 11. More to be deſired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; ſweeter alſo than honey and the honey-comb. Moreover, by them is thy ſervant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward.

Q. 19. What is the ſecond inference?

A. That we muſt mortify in ourſelves every luſt that contradicts God's will, and renounce without ourſelves every thing

that comes in competition therewith; 1 Cor. ix. *ult.* But I keep under my body, and bring it into ſubjection; leſt that by any means when I have preached to others, I myſelf ſhould be a caſt-away. Gal. vi. 14. But God forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Q. 20. What is the third inference?

A. That it is in vain, yea, a provocation, to pray, if we be not obedient to God's will; Prov. ii. 8, 9. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preſerveth the way of his ſaints. Then ſhalt thou underſtand righteouſneſs, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.

Q. 21. What is the fourth inference?

A. That the law ſtill hath the authority of a rule to believers, becauſe it reveals God's will, which they muſt do.

Concerning our daily Bread.

Queſt. 104. WHat do we pray for in the fourth petition?

A. *In the fourth petition, which is,* [Give us this day our daily bread], *we pray, that of God's free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his bleſſing with them.*

Q. 1. Why is this petition placed after the three former?

A. Becauſe thoſe concern immediately and generally God's glory, in the advancement of his name, kingdom and will, which ought to be preferred to all our perſonal concerns; Pſal. lxix. 9. For the zeal of thine houſe hath eaten me up. Acts xxi. 13. For I am ready not to be bound only, but alſo to die at Jeruſalem for the name of the Lord Jeſus.

Q. 2. Why is it put before the two following petitions?

A. Not for its worth, but for its order; for we can have no ſpiritual bleſſings, unleſs we have a natural being in this life.

Q. 3. What kind of bread is here meant?

A. Not ſpiritual bread, or our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, (as ſome), but corporal and temporal.

Q. 4. What is included in this word bread?

A. Not that only which we call ſtrictly bread, but all the good things of this preſent life.

Q. 5. Do we hereby beg pure neceſſities only?

A. No, we pray for conveniences for our comfort, as well as neceſſaries for our life.

Q. 6. Do we herein pray only for perſonal good things for our being?

A. No, we pray for civil good things for our condition, that according to our degree in the world, in which God hath placed us, we may have a convenient allowance.

Q. 7. Do we pray here for ourselves only?

A. No, but also for our charge, children, and family, that under and with us they may have the good things of this life.

Q. 8. Why do we pray to God for these good things, can we not get them ourselves, or our fellow-creatures give them to us?

A. Not without God: whatever we have of these things, they are from God; whoever be the second cause or instrument: If ourselves, God gives us ability and success to get them; if others, God inclined their hearts, and opened their hands to bestow them; Deut. viii. 17, 18. And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.

Q. 9. Why do we pray to God to give us bread?

A. Because the least crumb of bread is a free gift, and never can be merited by all we can do or suffer; Luke xvii. 10. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

Q. 10. Why are all these things couched under the expression of bread?

A. (1.) Because bread is one of the most necessary and useful things to preserve life. (2.) Because we must not ask delicacies and dainties of God.

Q. 11. What is meant by day in our petition?

A. Either, (1.) A natural day of twenty-four hours; or, (2.) The day of our whole life.

Q. 12. Why do we pray for daily bread?

A. Because God must give us the mercies and good things of every day, or else we cannot have them.

Q. 13. Why should we not pray for weekly, or monthly, or yearly bread, as well as daily?

A. (1.) Because it is fit we should be still sensible of our dependance upon God. (2.) Because we do frequently pray to God, and so exert our graces, and maintain communion with him, and daily render thanks for daily favours; Psalm lv. 17. Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice.

Q. 14. What need we to pray for daily bread, when we may have stores laid up for years?

A. They that have the good things of this life need to pray

this petition, as well as they that have them not. Not that they may have bread, but that it may be bread to them; for except God give his blessing upon it, bread would be ashes, and not sustentaneous to us; neither could all the comforts of this life do us any good; Isa. iii. 1. For behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water. Mal. ii. 1, 2. And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you: if ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because you do not lay it to heart.

Q. 15. Why do we pray only for daily bread, or a competency, may we not pray for abundance and riches?

A. No, because riches are a great snare and temptation; Matth. xix. 23, 24. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

Q. 16. What shall we then do with riches, if providence cast them upon us, shall we cast them away?

A. No, for some of the best of men, and greatest of God's favourites, have lived and died rich. But, (1.) We must wean our hearts from them; Psalm lxii. 10. Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart upon them. (2.) Be thankful for them; and, (3.) Fruitful with them in acts of piety and charity; 1 Tim. vi. 17, 19. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Q. 17. Wherefore is the bread called our bread?

A. Not because we are absolute lords and possessors of it, for it is God's only; Psalm xxiv. 1, 2. The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Psalm l. 10, 12. For every beast of the fo-

reſt is mine, and the cattle upon a thouſand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulneſs thereof. But, (1.) Becauſe we muſt have a covenant right to it; and, (2.) A civil right; we muſt come lawfully and honeſtly by, and ſo keep the good things of this life; 2 Theſſ. iii. 10. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat.

Q. 18. Having prayed for our daily bread, need we to labour and endeavour to get it?

A. Yes, we muſt labour in good and honeſt callings; God's bleſſing and man's induſtry muſt concur towards the preſent maintenance of life; Pſalm cxxviii. 1, 2. Bleſſed is every one that feareth the Lord: that walketh in his ways. For thou ſhalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy ſhalt thou be, and it ſhall be well with thee. Prov. x. 4, 22. He becometh poor that dealeth with a ſlack hand; but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. The bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich, and he addeth no ſorrow with it.

Q. 19. What is the firſt inference from it?

A. That we muſt not ſeek great matters for ourſelves, neither make them the matter of prayer to God; nor the end and deſign of our labours and callings among men.

Q. 20. What is a ſecond inference from hence?

A. That having food and raiment, we muſt be therewith content, and therefore thankful; 1 Tim. vi. 8. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. 1 Theſſ. v. 18. In every thing give thanks.

Q. 21. What is the third inference?

A. That we aſcribe not our ſucceſs in the world to our own ſkill and induſtry, for the wiſeſt and moſt induſtrious do ſometimes labour in the fire, and put their gain in a bag of holes; but to God's free donation to us, and to his bleſſing upon our endeavours; Gen. xxxiii. 5, 11. And he lift up his eyes, and ſaw the women and the children, and ſaid, Who are thoſe with thee? And he ſaid, the children which God hath graciouſly given thy ſervant.—Take, I pray thee, my bleſſing that is brought to thee, becauſe God hath dealt graciouſly with me, and becauſe I have enough. Deut. xxviii. 3. Bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the city, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be in the field. Ver. 6. Bleſſed ſhalt thou be when thou comeſt in, and bleſſed ſhalt thou be when thou goeſt out.

Concerning Forgiveneſs of Sins.

Queſt. 105. WHat do we pray for in the fifth petition?

A. *In the fifth petition, which is,* [And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,] *we pray, that God, for Chriſt's ſake, would freely pardon all our ſins; which we are the rather encouraged to aſk, becauſe by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.*

Q. 1. Why doth this petition immediately follow the former?

A. To teach, that all temporal and corporal good things, without ſpecial and ſpiritual ones, are little worth; Pſalm iv. 6. There be many that ſay, Who will ſhew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Pſalm xvii. 14, 15. From men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whoſe belly thou filleſt with thy hid treaſure. They are full of children, and leave the reſt of their ſubſtance to their babes. As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs: I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake with thy likeneſs.

Q. 2. Why is it annexed to the former with the copulative *and?*

A. To teach, that to be one minute in the confluence of all earthly good things, without the pardon of ſin, is a very dangerous and dreadful condition; Luke xii. 16, 20. And he ſpake a parable unto them, ſaying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: But God ſaid unto him, Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee; then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided?

Q. 3. Why is forgiveneſs of ſins placed in the front of ſpiritual bleſſings?

A. Becauſe till ſin be pardoned, we are under wrath, and can have no ſpecial ſaving grace applied to us, till we are accepted; till we are in Chriſt, we have no covenant-right to the bleſſings of Chriſt; Mat. xi. 28. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Ver. 30. For my yoke is eaſy, and my burden is light; John xv. 4, 5. Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itſelf, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.——Ver. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you; ye ſhall aſk what ye will, and it ſhall be done unto you. John iii. *ult.* He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life; and he that believeth

not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Q. 4. Why do we pray for forgiveness? Cannot we make amends for our sins, and be freed from their guilt, without pardon?

A. No, all that we can ever do, or suffer, can never expiate the guilt of the least sin; Psalm xlix. 7, 8. None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (for the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever.) 1 Sam. ii. 25. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?

Q. 5. Does God then freely, and out of mere grace, forgive us?

A. Yes, without any respect had to any thing we can do, or be; Isa. xliii. 25. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Rom ix. 15. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Ver. 18. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Q. 6. How doth God forgive sins?

A. (1.) Universally, all sins; Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands; forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin. Jer. xxxiii. 8. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me: And I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. Hosea xiv. 2. Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously. (2.) Completely, and perfectly; Isa. xliii. 25. I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Psalm ciii. 12. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Mic. vii. 19. He will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. Isa. xxxviii. 17. For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. (3.) Everlastingly; Jer. xxxi. 34. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Heb. viii. 12. And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Q. 7. But doth not God punish them afterward, whom he has justified and forgiven?

A. No, not with a proper and vindictive punishment; but

he brings evils upon them for their sins, as a father chastises his child; and other sorts of afflictions for their spiritual good: He may be angry, as a Father, with those he has pardoned, but never hate them as a condemning Judge; Psalm lxxxix. 28. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. Ver. 34. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.

Q. 8. How can God be said freely to pardon all our sins, when we pray it may be done for Christ's sake; does not that imply that Christ has satisfied God for our sins, and deserved our remission?

A. Yes, it does so; for the Lord Christ, by his life and death, did satisfy divine justice, and did merit our forgiveness: But if he did so, we did not so; our sins cost him dear, but their pardon cost us nothing; our pardon is perfectly free to us, though due to Christ, for God gave Christ freely for us; God accepts of his merits, and applies them to us freely; Rom. iii. 24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.

Q. 9. But is there nothing required from us as the condition of pardon? and if so, how can it be absolutely free?

A. There are required repentance from sin, and faith in the Lord Christ; Luke xiii. 3. But except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish; John iii. *ult.* And he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. This is required from us towards our pardon, but yet it is free, (1.) Because God freely ordains thus to pardon. (2.) Because both these are the free gifts of God; Acts xi. 18. Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. Eph. ii. 8. For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.

Q. 10. When then are our sins forgiven?

A. Just upon our closure with Christ by faith, in that very moment; Rom. v. 1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ Rom. viii. 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.

Q. 11. Why do we pray in the answer, for the forgiveness of all our sins?

A. Because if the least guilt should remain upon us, it would exclude us from God's favour, and lodge us in everlasting burnings; Rom. vi. *ult.* For the wages of sin is death.

Q. 12. What are the privileges and blessings that accompany pardon?

A. Juſtification is accompanied with adoption; John i. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name. With the Spirit and principle of all grace and holineſs; 1 Cor. vi. 11. And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God. With an infallible title to eternal glory; John iii. 16. That whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life; Rom. viii. 30. Whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.

Q. 13. How may we know that we are pardoned and juſtified?

A. Ordinarily, by our ſanctification, by our loathing of ſin, our contempt of the world, our valuing of Chriſt, our love and thankfulneſs to God, *&c.* 1 Cor. vi. 11. But ye are ſanctified. Rom. vii. 24. O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death? Gal. vi. 14. By whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. 1 Pet. ii. 7. Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious. Luke vii. 47. Her ſins, which are many, are forgiven; for ſhe loved much.

Q. 14 What is meant by [our?] Is it only ſuch ſins as we have perſonally and actually committed?

A. No, but alſo Adam's ſin, which is ours by imputation; Rom. v. 19. By one man's diſobedience, many were made ſinners. And original ſin, which is ours by inheſion; Pſalm li. 5. Behold, I was ſhapen iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me. And other mens ſins, which we have made ours, by exciting them to them, not hindering of them, ſilence at them, and other ways; 2 Sam. xii 9. Thou haſt killed Uriah the Hittite with the ſword, and haſt taken his wife to be thy wife, and haſt ſlain him with the ſword of the children of Ammon. 1 Tim. v. 22. Neither be partaker of other mens ſins.

Q. 15. Wherefore are ſins called debts?

A. Becauſe they are a non-payment of God's dues, a non-performance of our duty; which makes us liable to the arreſt of death, and to the priſon of hell.

Q. 16. Why do we plead our own forgiveneſs of others?

A. Not as any merit of our own pardon; but either as an encouragement to ourſelves to beg pardon; ſeeing ſuch evil, envious, and malignant perſons, are enabled to forgive others, much more may we hope the good and gracious God will forgive us: or, as a condition, without which we can have no pardon, and with which we ſhall; Matth. vi. 14. For if ye

forgive men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will alſo forgive you.

Q. 17. How do others treſpaſs againſt us?

A. When they injure us, either in our perſons, or names, or families, or eſtates, or ſouls, *&c.* 1 Sam. ii. 25. If one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him; but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?

Q. 18. Can we forgive our neighbour freely, fully, and perfectly, as God doth forgive us?

A. We cannot.

Q. 19. What then is the meaning of God's forgiving us, as we forgive others?

A. Not as to the quantity and perfection of forgiveneſs, but as to the ſincerity and quality thereof; Matth. xviii. *ult.* So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their treſpaſſes.

Q. 20. Are we alwayc bound to manifeſt outwardly our love and forgiveneſs to all our enemies, and to behave ourſelves towards them as friends?

A. No, if we have experienced them to be treacherous and falſe, and ſee no change, we are not bound to truſt them; if they be, and remain, wicked and profane, we muſt not aſſociate with them; Pſal. xxvi. 5. I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not ſit with the wicked. Ver. 4. I have not ſat with vain perſons, neither will I go in with diſſemblers.

Q. 21. What then muſt we do to ſuch?

A. We muſt heartily forgive them all their injuries, we muſt love them with the love of benevolence, pray for them, and be ready and willing to do them all good, both of body and ſoul; Matth. v. 44, 45. But I ſay unto you, Love your enemies; bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you. That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil, and on the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt.

Q. 22. If we forgive others, ſhall we be forgiven ourſelves?

A. We ſhall, if out of obedience to God, and love to Chriſt, we do it.

Q. 23. What is the firſt inference from hence?

A. That except our ſins be forgiven, we are loſt and undone creatures; and therefore we muſt never be contented, till we are pardoned.

Q. 24. What is a ſecond inference?

A. That God is a God of love, goodneſs, and pardon; ſeeing he will not pardon us, if we do not pardon others; but will, if we do ſo.

Q. 25. What is a third inference?

A. That if we live in hatred when we pray the Lord's prayer, we pray for our own damnation; Matth. xviii. 22. Jeſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee, Until ſeven times, but until ſeventy times ſeven. Ver. 35. So likewiſe ſhall my heavenly Father do alſo unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their treſpaſſes.

Of God's leading us into temptation.

Queſt. 106. WHat do we pray for in the ſixth petition?

A. *In the ſixth petition, which is,* [And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil:] *we pray, that God would either keep us from being tempted to ſin, or ſupport and deliver us when we are tempted.*

Q. 1. Why is this petition joined to the former with the copulative *and*?

A. Becauſe it will be but little advantage to have former ſins pardoned, and to be left to the power and practice, to the love and trade of ſin for the future; Ezek. xviii. 26. When a righteous man turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done, ſhall he die

Q. 2. What is meant by temptation?

A. In general, a trial or probation of what is in us, or of what we will do.

Q. 3. What is meant by temptation here?

A. Temptation to ſin and wickedneſs.

Q. 4. How may we be ſaid to be tempted to ſin?

A. (1.) Effectually by ourſelves, and our own hearts; Jam. i. 14, 15. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed. Then when luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth ſin; and ſin, when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death. (2.) Formally, with an intention to draw into ſin; and ſo we are tempted of the devil; 1 Chron. xxi. 1. And Satan ſtood up againſt Iſrael, and provoked David to number Iſrael. Matth. iv. 1, 3. Then was Jeſus led up of the Spirit into the wilderneſs, to be tempted of the devil. And when the Tempter came to him, he ſaid, If thou be the Son of God, command that theſe ſtones be made bread. (3.) Innocently, and blameleſly; and ſo God is ſaid to tempt; 2 Sam. xxiv. 1.

And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel; and he moved David against them to say, Go number Israel and Judah.

Q. 5. How many ways may God be said to tempt evil?

A. (1.) By withdrawing his grace, either common, or special; 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. Howbeit, in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land; God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart. (2.) By permitting Satan, and wicked men, to tempt; 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. He moved David against them, to say, Go and number Israel and Judah. With 1 Chron. xxi. 1. Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David. Matth. iv. 1. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. (3.) By presenting occasions in his providence, which he knows will be abused to sin; as in the fall of Adam, the hardening of Pharaoh, *&c.*

Q. 6. What do we beg in this petition?

A. We beg, that we may not any of these, or any other ways, whereby the holy God may be said to lead into temptation, be led thereinto; Psalm cxli 1. Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity; and let me not eat of their dainties. Psalm xix. 13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: Then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

Q. 7. What is meant by evil?

A. Some understand it of the devil, but the best meaning is sin, which is the evil of evils, and makes the devil evil, and is the worst of evils the devil can bring upon us, and is usually so understood in scripture; Psalm xcvii. 10. Ye that love the Lord, hate evil. Isa. i. 16. Cease to do evil. Amos v. 15. Hate the evil, and love the good. Rom. xii. 9. Abhor that which is evil.

Q. 8. What is meant by deliverance from evil?

A. That if God sees meet to permit us to be tempted by Satan, and the wicked without, or by our own hearts within, to sin; or occasionally, by his providence; that he will not leave us, but undertake for us, that we may not be led into sin thereby, but by his grace be made more than conquerors. Psalm li. 10. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Psalm cxix. 133. Order my steps in thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me. According to his

promiſe; 1 Cor. x. 13. But God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that ye are able. 2 Cor. xii. 9. And he ſaid unto me, My grace is ſufficient for thee; for my ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs.

Q. 9. What is the firſt inference?

A. That ſin is the worſt of evils.

Q. 10. What is the ſecond inference?

A. That without God's grace we can never withſtand, but ſhall be overcome by every temptation; 2 Cor. iii. 5. Not that we are ſufficient of ourſelves, to think any thing as of ourſelves; but our ſufficiency is of God. John xv. 5. For without me ye can do nothing.

Q. 11. What is the third inference?

A. That we muſt do all we can to keep ourſelves from temptation, and to engage the grace of God with us in temptation, by prayer, by pleaſing the Spirit of God, by looking to Jeſus, *&c.*

Of the Concluſion.

Queſt 107. WHat doth the concluſion of the Lord's prayer teach us?

A. *The concluſion of the Lord's prayer, which is,* [For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever; *Amen.*] *teacheth us, to take our encouragement in prayer from God only; and in our prayers to praiſe him; aſcribing kingdom, power, and glory to him; and in teſtimony of our deſire, and aſſurance to be heard, we ſay,* Amen.

Q. 1. Why is the concluſion joined to the particle *For?*

A. To teach us, that therein are included arguments, or reaſons to preſs God withal, and to prevail with him for audience.

Q. 2. But is it lawful to argue with God, and to urge him with reaſons in prayer?

A. It is not only lawful, but expedient, yea, highly commendable; as is ſeen in the ſaints prayers. In Moſes's, Numb. xiv. 13. And Moſes ſaid unto the Lord, Then the Egyptians ſhall hear it, (for thou broughteſt up this people in thy might from among them.) Ver. 19. Pardon, I beſeech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatneſs of thy mercy, and as thou haſt forgiven this people from Egypt, even until now. In Joſhua's, chap. vii. 3. And Joſhua ſaid, Alas! O Lord God; wherefore haſt thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to deſtroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other ſide Jordan. Ver. 9. For the Canaanites, and all

the inhabitants of the land ſhall hear of it, and ſhall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: And what wilt thou do unto thy great name? In Aſa's, 2 Chron. xiv. 11. And Aſa cried unto the Lord his God, and ſaid, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power. Help us, O Lord our God, for we reſt on thee; and in thy name we go againſt this great multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let no man prevail againſt thee. In Jehoſhaphat's, 2 Chron. xx. 6.——And ſaid, O Lord God of our fathers, art not thou God in heaven? And ruleſt not thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? And in thine hand is there not power and might, ſo that none is able to withſtand thee? And Hezekiah's, 2 Kings xix. 15. And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord, and ſaid, O Lord God of Iſrael, which dwelleſt between the cherubims; thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: Thou haſt made heaven and earth. Ver. 19. Now, therefore, O Lord our God, *&c.*

Q. 3. But to what purpoſe, can we think to prevail with God, by our arguments and importunities?

A. They are not uſed, as though we would put God in remembrance of any thing, or would prevail with God to do that for us, which he is unwilling to give.

Q. 4. Why then?

A. For our own profit, for the enlarging of our own hearts, for the exciting of our fervency, for the exerting of faith, hope, zeal, charity, *&c.* in prayer; and ſo to prepare ourſelves for the mercy, that we may the more gratefully receive it, and the more fruitfully employ it.

Q. 5. How many arguments are in this concluſion?

A. Three.

Q. 6. From whence are they taken?

A. From God's kingdom, from his power, and from his glory.

Q. 7. What kingdom is here meant?

A. God's univerſal, eſſential, and abſolute kingdom; wherein may be, and is involved, his ſpecial kingdom over the church.

Q. 8. What are the arguments from hence?

A. Becauſe all that we can pray for in this prayer, is for the advancement and perfecting of this his kingdom, by the deſtruction of all perſons and things that oppoſe it, and the completion of his dominion over all his ſubjects; therefore he would grant all theſe requeſts.

Q. 9. What is another?

A. Because he being such an absolute Lord and sovereign, has an undeniable right, and unquestionable authority, to give and grant all we ask, and to effect and bring to pass all we beg: For all persons and things are his own, and at his disposal. Mat. xx. 15. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?

Q. 10. What is meant by power?

A. God's essential, infinite, irresistible power, whereby he can do what he pleases; Psalm cxxxv. 6. Whatsoever the Lord pleased *&c.*

Q. 11. What is the argument from hence?

A. That we ask nothing from God, but what he can do with infinite ease, in despite of all the opposition that hell, earth, and heart can make to the contrary; Philip. iii. *ult.* According to the working, *&c.* Eph. iii. 20. Now unto him that is able, *&c.*

Q. 12. What is meant by glory?

A. Not his essential glory, which no man, or angel, can ever apprehend.

Q. 13. What glory then?

A. His declared and acknowledged glory, even the accomplishment of all his decrees by his providence; and then the love, the adoration, and the praises, the self-dedications of angels and saints, returned to him for the same.

Q. 14. What is the argument or motive from hence?

A. That seeing the substance of every request does directly tend to, and will perfectly end in, this glory of God, when they are fully answered; therefore he would gradually answer them while we are here, and perfectly at last, to the advancement of his glory now, and the completion of it then. 1 Chron. xxix. 11. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, *&c.* Josh. vii. 9. And what wilt thou do unto thy great name? Isa. xlii. 8. I am the Lord, that is my name, *&c.* Isa. xlviii. 11. For my own sake, even for my own sake, will I do it, *&c.*

Q. 15. Why is Amen added?

A. Because it is the usual conclusion of prayers and praises; Psalm xli. 13. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, *&c.* Psalm lxxii. 19. And blessed be his glorious name for ever, *&c.* 2 Cor. xiii. *ult.* The grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God, *&c.* Rom. xvi. 20. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Q. 16. But what doth this word here signify?

A. It ſignifies, (1.) The reality and ardency of our deſires to be granted in what we pray for; Rev. xxii. 20. He which teſtifieth theſe things, ſaith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even ſo come, Lord Jeſus.

Q. 17. And what beſides?

A. Our truſt and firm confidence that we ſhall be heard and anſwered in all theſe our requeſts; Rev. i. 7. Even ſo, Amen. Rev. vii. 12, Saying, Amen, Bleſſing, and glory, and wiſdom, *&c.*

Q. 18. What are the inferences from hence?

A. That we ought to uſe in prayer all ſuch arguments, as may moſt and beſt affect our hearts towards God, excite our graces, and ſucceed with God.

Q. 19. What is another?

A. That all we pray for muſt be in a ſubſerviency to God's kingdom, and with a deſire of his glory.

Q. 20. What is the next?

A. That we muſt act according to our prayers; do all we can for the advancement of God's kingdom, and the exaltation of his glory, as ſubjects and votaries thereto; Pſalm cxvi. 16. 1 Cor. x. 31.

Q. 21. What may more be gathered hence?

A. That as we ought to begin, ſo to continue, and conclude our prayers, in loweſt adorations of God, and acknowledgements of his glory and attributes.

Q. 22. What more doth this concluſion teach?

A. That in prayer we muſt be fervent in our deſires, and longing for what we pray, James v. 16.

Q. 23. Is there any thing beſides?

A. That praying for things agreeable to God's will, we ought to be confident that we ſhall ſucceed in our requeſts, praying for the matter, and after the manner of this prayer; James i. 6, 8. Matth. xxi. 22.

Vindiciae Legis et Foederis:

OR, A

REPLY

To Mr. PHILIP CARY's Solemn Call;

Wherein he pretends to answer all the Arguments of

Mr. ALLEN, Mr. BAXTER, Mr. SYDENHAM, Mr. SEDGWICK, Mr. ROBERTS, and Dr. BURTHOGGE,

For the Right of *Believers Infants* to BAPTISM.

By proving the Law at Sinai, and the Covenant of Circumcision with Abraham, were the very same with Adam's Covenant of Works, and that because the Gospel-covenant is absolute.

A friendly PREFACE to the AUTHOR of the *Solemn Call*, and the more discreet and charitable of the Party concerned with him in this Controversy.

Christian Friends,

WHEN we open our Bibles, and read that text, 1 Cor. i. 10. we have cause to deal with it as Origen once did by another scripture, even close the book and weep over it, in consideration of the weak and feeble influences such melting words, delivered with such a pathos, have upon the hearts of professors this day. "Now, I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment."

I beseech you] He dips the nail in oil, that it may drive the easier. *I beseech you, brethren*] A compellation breathing sweetness and affection, and should drop from our lips into such others ears with the same effect that word once did upon

the ears of Benhadad's ſervants, *My brother Benhadad. Sirs*, (ſaid Moſes to the ſtriving Iſraelites) *ye are brethren.* O when ſhall the church become a true Philadelphia!

I beſeech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt] or as you love Jeſus Chriſt, *ut quantum ipſum amant, tantum ſtudeat concordiæ*, ſaith Calvin: Be as ſtudious of concord as you are free in profeſſing love to Chriſt.

That there be no diviſions] or rents among you: a Σχισμα, ſchiſm, or rent in the church, is much the ſame, and altogether as dangerous as a Στασις, or ſedition in the commonwealth, and harder to be cured. For as the Lord Verulam truly obſerves, Differences amongſt perſecuting enemies and the church, are like the ſtrivings of the Egyptian with the Iſraelite, which Moſes quickly ended, by knocking down the Egyptian; but diſſentions in the church are like the ſtriving of one Iſraelite with another; and all that Moſes can do to quiet and part theſe, is only by fair and gentle words, and reminding them that they are brethren.

Great is the miſchief of diviſions among Chriſtians; and the leſs the grounds and cauſes are, the greater always is the ſin and miſchief of them. In the *primitive church* contentions grow fervent about meats lawful and unlawful, *which did not profit*, the meaning is, it greatly damnified them that were occupied therein, Heb. xiii. 9. Practical religion among them grew cold, as diſputations about theſe trifles grew fervent.

The readieſt way to cool ſuch heats is, by diſcovering the trivial nature of the matter contended about; as Demoſthenes appeaſed the tumult among the people raiſed by a ſmall occaſion, by relating to them the ſtory of a man that hired an *aſs* to carry him a journey, but the ſun ſhining fervent, he was forced to quit her back, and betake himſelf to her ſhadow; the owner withſtood him, alledging, that he had hired the body of the aſs, but her ſhadow was not in the bargain; and ſo the contention between them grew as hot as the ſun. Many ſuch trifles have raiſed great contentions in the world, witneſs the great contention betwixt the *Eaſtern* and *Weſtern church* about keeping of Eaſter.

Other points there are of greater moment, about which good men contend, and yet theſe oftentimes are magnified much above their true intrinſical value. So I am ſure it is in the controverſy before us. Mr. Cary tells us, that theſe things will be found at length to be of higheſt concernment unto us, and muſt therefore be our moſt ſerious practice, *p.* 243. If ſo, then the proper ſubject of baptiſm muſt be one of thoſe

that is of greateſt weight, and the profeſſion thereof the very Schibboleth to diſtinguiſh one perſon from another in matters of religion. No wonder therefore the fires of contention are blown up to ſuch a vehement heat, even in ſuch an improper ſeaſon; much like the contentions among the Engliſh *fugitives* at Frankfort, when their brethren were frying in the flames at Smithfield. Juſt ſo muſt we be ſcuffling, whilſt thouſands of our brethren are bleeding in Ireland. Had we a true ſenſe of the quality of the ſubjects, or the unſeaſonableneſs of the time, it ſhould certainly allay theſe heats among us. Did we ſee who ſtand by, and look with pleaſure upon our follies, it would quickly allay our heats. Tertullian tells the Chriſtians of his time, that they were like the Funambulones, or men that walk upon ropes, the leaſt tread awry might be their ruin, ſo narrowly did their enemies watch them.

Sirs, the peace, ſafety and honour of the diſſenting intereſt are things of too great value to be hazarded amongſt the hands of our common enemies. You may fancy they will neglect the advantage you give them; but if they do, the devil will call them fools for it. Mr. Herle tells us of a king's fool, who wrote down the king himſelf in his table among his brother-fools, becauſe he had truſted an African ſtranger with four thouſand pounds to buy Barbary horſes. The king aſked him how he would make him amends, if the ſtranger ſhould come again? Why then (ſaid he) I'll blot your name out of my table of fools, and write down the African in your ſtead. Think not our enemies are ſuch fools to neglect the advantage we caſt into their hands. It is a weighty note of Livy, *Conſilia non dant homines rebus, ſed res hominibus;* Men do not counſel things, but time and things counſel men. Methinks the poſtures of times and affairs give us better counſels than we ſeem to be governed by in ſuch work as this. Diviſions of forty years ſtanding and more, about infants baptiſm, have eaten up the time, waſted the ſpirits, and alienated the hearts of Engliſh profeſſors, divided them both in ſociety and love; by reaſon whereof God's pleaſant plant in this reſembles the bramble, which taking root at both ends, by reaſon of the rencounters of the ſap, commonly withers in the middle. Your brethren, in their Narrative from their General-Aſſembly, make a ſad and ſenſible complaint of withering in the power of godlineſs. And truly we as well as they may complain with the church, *We do all fade as a leaf:* The Lord help us to diſcern the true cauſe, whether it be not the miſplacing of our zeal, our being cold where we ſhould be fervent, and fervent

hot where it ſhould be cold; and whether the eating up of ſo much time and ſtudy about baptizing of infants, have not kept us theſe forty years in the infancy of our graces?

I well remember that bleſſed time, when *ours* and *yours* were terms almoſt unknown amongſt profeſſors in England. When their affections and prayers melted and mingled together ſweetly in days of humiliation, and other duties of edifying and heavenly communion; and then churches began to flouriſh, and the graces of Chriſtians every where flouriſhed, and became fruitful: but no ſooner did the ſaints divide in ſociety and affection, but theſe pleaſant bloſſoms were nipt by it, as by a froſty morning; the church formed itſelf as it were, into two armies, ſet in *battalia* againſt each other. It was now with us much like as it is ſaid of the *amphisbena*, that hath an head at either end, of which neither can well move without the conſent of both; but, if each move a contrary way, the body tears in the middle. I doubt not but many that differed from us belonged to Chriſt, the ſame head with us; and yet it is paſt doubt, that many who ſeemed to be of us were headed by Satan; and quickly diſcovered themſelves to be ſo, by running farther than we firſt, or you next, imagined, even into Quakeriſm, Socinianiſm, Ranteriſm, and the fouleſt puddle and ſink of complicated errors; of which an impartial ſtranger, under the name of Honorius Reggius, ἀναγραμματικῶς, Georgius Hornius having heard the report in his own country, came over on purpoſe into England for his particular and perfect information, and hath given the foreign churches a full and ſad account thereof in a Latin narrative, which I have by me; whereby I find, that, if the Lord in mercy to us had not ſet in a third party with the common calamity upon us all, we ourſelves muſt in all probability have mutually ruined each other. But God ſaw other hands fitter for ſuch dirty work than ours; and now it was time to reflect upon former follies, and renew our ancient acquaintance in the common goals. And, through the goodneſs of God, this did ſomewhat allay the heats of good men, and gave us freſh hopes of an hearty and laſting reintegration. We hoped the furnace might have purged our droſs, and melted our hearts into unity, both by diſcovering the evils for which the Lord afflicted us, and the ſincerity of the ſufferers hearts under thoſe trials. 'Chriſtians, (ſaith Mr. Jenkins) if we muſt die, let us die like men, by an unanimous holy contention againſt the common enemy; not like fools,

'by giving him our ſword, and deſtroying one another by 'ſchiſms in our own bowels.'

But alas! alas! no ſooner is the rod off our backs, and a reſpite from ſufferings given us, but we are preſently ſounding an alarm to the battle again, and, to my ſorrow, myſelf unavoidably engaged therein.

Friends, I have a witneſs in many of your boſoms, how peaceably and reſpectfully I have always carried it towards you, even to ſuch a degree as began to bring me under the ſuſpicion of ſome of your party, that I was inclining to their opinion, though I did not openly profeſs it. But the true reaſons of my moderation in this point were, (1.) That I ever did, and ſtill do look upon many of you as Chriſtians, found in the other great doctrines of the goſpel. (2.) That there are difficulties in this controverſy which may puzzle the minds of well-meaning Chriſtians. (3.) I highly valued the peace of the *church*, and durſt do nothing that tended to keep open the breaches upon a controverſy of this nature, you being for purity in doctrine and worſhip in moſt other controverted points, as well as we. (4.) I obſerved how rare a thing it is for engaged parties to give ground.

Qui vélit ingenio cedere, rarus erit.

'Mad diſputants to reaſon ſeldom yield.'

(5.) My head, heart, and hands have been filled with better employments, from which I am extremely loth to be diverted. If Bellarmine turned with loathing from ſchool-divinity, becauſe it wanted the ſweet juice of piety, much more may I turn from ſuch perverſe diſputes as theſe: Sure I may find as fair expoſitions of ſcripture, and as accurate and legitimate diſtinctions among the *ſchool-men*, as in Mr. Tombes's Examen and Apology; or (which for the moſt part is but a tranſcript of both) in Mr. Cary's Solemn Call. But I ſee I muſt not be my own chuſer; I cannot now be both ſilent and innocent; for in this Solemn Call I find the great doctrines of God's covenants abuſed by my neighbour; the books diſperſed into many families related to me in this place, one of them delivered to me by the Author's own hands, with a preſſing deſire to give my judgment upon it: Several objections which I privately and ſeaſonably ſent him, to prevent the ſin and folly of his attempt, pretended to be anſwered from *p.* 164. *ad p.* 183. Thus am I neceſſarily brought into the field of controverſy: whither I come not a *volunteer*, but a *preſſed man*; not out of choice, but neceſſity. And now I am here, I reſolve to be only *Adverſarius litis, non perſonæ*, an adverſary in the contro-

verſy, not to the perſon, eſpecially of my friendly neighbour. Neither would I have appeared thus publicly againſt him, if differences could have been accommodated, and the evil prevented, in a more private way; in order thereunto, I have punctually obſerved and kept the rules and meaſures of friendſhip.

It is poſſible ſome may judge my ſtile againſt him to be too ſharp; but if they pleaſe to read the concluſion of his *Call*, and my *Anſwer*, I preſume they will find enough to make atonement for that fault, if it be a fault. It is from the nature of the matter before me, not from defect of charity to the perſon or party, that I am forced to be ſo plain and pungent as I am.

To conclude, I ſuſpect this very preface may be alſo cenſured for its plainneſs and tediouſneſs. I confeſs, when times are buſy we ſhould be brief; and I am perſuaded a ſufficient preface may be contracted into four words, ἄνευ προοιμίου καὶ παθῶν, *without preface or paſſions*. However, I have a little eaſed my own heart, by diſcharging my duty to my differing brethren, and pleaſed myſelf, if not them.

The God of peace create peace in all the borders of Sion, beat our *ſwords* into *plow-ſhares*, and our *ſpears* into *pruning-hooks*; I mean, our *polemicals* into *practicals*; that Jeruſalem may once more be a city compact, and no more terrible to herſelf, but only to her enemies, as an army with banners. This, brethren, is the prayer, and ſhall ever be the endeavour of,

Your friend and ſervant in Chriſt,

JOHN FLAVEL.

PROLEGOMENA.

BEFORE we enter into the main controverſy, it will be neceſſary to acquaint the reader, why I begin with the middle of the book; and it is becauſe I there find theſe three principles or poſitions, on which the other parts of his diſcourſe are ſuperſtructed; and theſe being deſtroyed, his other diſcourſes are but *arenæ, ſine calce*. I properly therefore begin with the foundation.

Next I ſhall ſhew how far we are agreed in the matters here controverted, and where it is in each of theſe that the controverſy indeed lies betwixt us. And as to

I. *Position*, viz.

That the Sinai law is the same with Adam's covenant of works, made in paradise:

The difference betwixt us here is not (1.) Whether both these be called covenants in Scripture? Nor (2.) Whether there was no grace at all in both, or either of them; for we are agreed, it is grace in God to enter into covenant with man, whatever that covenant be. Nor (3.) Whether the Sinai law be not a covenant of works to some men, by their own fault and occasion? Nor (4.) Whether the scriptures do not many times speak of it in that very sense and notion wherein *carnal justiciaries* apprehend, and take it; and by rejecting Christ, make it so to themselves? Nor (5.) Whether the very matter of the *law of nature* be not revived and represented in the *Sinai law*? These are not the points we contend about. But the question is, Whether the Sinai law do in its own nature, and according to God's purpose and design in the promulgation of it, revive the law of nature, to the same ends and uses it served to in Adam's covenant; and so be properly, and truly a covenant of works? Or whether God had not gracious and evangelical ends and purposes, *viz.* By such a dreadful representation of the severe and impracticable terms of the first covenant, instead of obliging them to the personal and punctual observance of them for righteousness and life, he did not rather design to convince them of the impossibility of legal righteousness, humble proud nature, and shew them the necessity of betaking themselves to Christ, now exhibited in the new covenant, as the only refuge to fallen sinners. The latter I defend according to the Scriptures, the former Mr. Cary seems to assert and vehemently argue for.

2*dly*, In this controversy about the Sinai law, I do not find Mr. Cary distinguish (as he ought) betwixt the law considered more largely and complexly, as containing both the *moral* and *ceremonial law*, for both which it is often taken in Scripture, and more strictly for the *moral law* only, as it is sometimes used in Scripture. These two he makes one and the same *covenant of works*: though there be some that doubt whether the mere *moral law* may not be a *covenant of works*: yet I never met with any man before, that durst affirm the *ceremonial law*, which is so full of Christ, to be so; and to this law it is that *circumcision* appertains.

3*dly*, The moral law, strictly taken for the ten commandments, is not by him distinguished (as it ought to be, and as the Scripture frequently doth) according to God's intention

and design in the promulgation of it, which was to add it as an appendix to the promise, Gal. iii. 19. and not to set it up as an opposite covenant, Gal. iii. 21. as the carnal Jews, *mistaking and perverting the use and end of the law*, and making it to themselves a covenant of works, by making it the very rule and reason of their justification before God, Rom. ix. 32, 33. Rom. x. 3. These things ought carefully to have been distinguished, forasmuch as the whole controversy depends on this double sense and intention of the law; yea, the very *denomination* of that law depends hereon: for I affirm, it ought not to be denominated from the abused and mistaken end of it amongst carnal men, but from the true scope, design and end for which God published it after the fall: and though we find such expressions as these in Scripture, "The man that "doth them shall live in them;" and, "Cursed is every one "that continueth not in all things," *&c.* yet these respecting the law, not according to God's intention, but man's corruption and abuse of it, the law is not thereby to be denominated a covenant of works. God's end was not to justify them, but to try them by that terrible dispensation, Exod. xx. 20. whether they would still hanker after that natural way of self-righteousness; for this end God propounded the terms of the first covenant to them on Sinai, not to open the way of self-justification to them, but to convince them, and shut them up to Christ; just as our Saviour, Matth. xix. 17. puts the young man upon keeping the commandments, not to drive him from, but necessitate him to himself in the way of faith.

The law in both these senses is excellently described, Gal. iv. in that allegory of Hagar and Sarah, the figures of the two covenants. Hagar in her first and proper station was but a serviceable *handmaid* to Sarah, as the law is a *schoolmaster* to Christ; but when Hagar the handmaid is taken into Sarah's bed, and brings forth children that aspire to the inheritance, then saith the Scripture, "Cast out the bond-"woman, with her son." So it is here; take the law in its primary use, as God designed it, as a *schoolmaster* or *handmaid* to Christ and the *promise*, so it is consistent with them, and excellently subservient to them; but if we marry this handmaid, and espouse it as a *covenant of works*, then are we bound to it for life, Rom. vii. and must have nothing to do with Christ. The believers of the Old Testament had true apprehensions of the right end and use of the law, which directed them to Christ, and so they became children of the *free-woman*. The carnal Jews trusted to the works of the law for righteous-

neſs, and ſo became the children of the *bond-woman*: but neither could be children of both at once; no more than the ſame man can naturally be born of two mothers. This is the difference betwixt us about the firſt poſition. And as to the

II. *Poſition.*

That Abraham's covenant, Gen. xvii. *is an Adam's covenant of works alſo, becauſe circumciſion was annexed to it, which obliged men to keep the whole law.*

The controverſy betwixt us in this point, is not whether *circumciſion* were an ordinance of God, annexed by him to his *covenant* with Abraham? Nor (2.) Whether Abraham's ordinary and extraordinary ſeed ought to be, and actually were ſigned by it? Nor (3.) Whether it were a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith to any individual perſon, for he allows it to be ſo to Abraham? Nor (4.) Whether it pertained to the *ceremonial law*, and ſo muſt ceaſe at the death of Chriſt? But the difference betwixt us is, Whether (1.) It was a ſeal of the covenant to none but Abraham? And, (2.) Whether in the very nature of the act, or only from the intention of the agent, it did oblige men to keep the whole law, as Adam was obliged to keep it in innocency? (3.) Whether it were utterly aboliſhed at the death of Chriſt, as a condition of the *covenant of works*? or being a ſign of the ſame *covenant of grace* we are now under, it be not ſucceeded by the new goſpel-ſign, which is baptiſm? Mr. Cary affirms, that it was in itſelf a condition of the *covenant of works*, and being annexed to God's covenant with Abraham, Gen. xvii. it made that a true Adam's *covenant of works* alſo. This I utterly deny, and ſay, Abraham's covenant was a true covenant of grace. (2.) That circumciſion was a ſeal of righteouſneſs of faith, and therefore could not poſſibly belong to the *covenant of works*. (3.) That as it was applied both to the ordinary and extraordinary infant-ſeed of Abraham, during that adminiſtration of the covenant, ſo it is the will of Chriſt that baptiſm ſhould take its place under the goſpel, and be applied now to the infant-ſeed of all Abraham's ſpiritual children. Theſe are the things wherein we differ about the ſecond *poſition*. And laſtly, as to the

III. *Poſition.*

That neither Moſes's law, Exod. xx. *nor God's covenant with Abraham,* Gen. xvii. *can be any other than an Adam's covenant of works, becauſe they have each of them conditions in them on man's part; but the goſpel-covenant hath none at all, but is altogether free and abſolute.*

The controverſy here betwixt us is not (1.) Whether the

gospel-covenant requires no duties at all of them that are under it? Nor (2.) Whether it requires any such conditions as were in Adam's covenant, namely, perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience, under the severest penalty of a curse, and admitting no place of repentance? Nor (3.) Whether any condition required by it on *our* part, have any thing in its own nature meritorious of the benefits promised? Nor (4.) Whether we be able in our own strength, and by the power of our free-will, without the *preventing* as well as the *assisting* grace of God, to perform any such work or duty as we call a *condition?* In these things we have no controversy; but the only question betwixt us is,

Whether in the new covenant some act of ours (tho' it have no merit in it, nor can be done in our own single strength) be not required to be performed by us, antecedently to a blessing or privilege consequent by virtue of a promise? And whether such an act or duty, being of a suspending nature to the blessing promised, it have not the true and proper nature of a *gospel-condition?* This I affirm, and he positively denies.

These three *positions* being confuted, and the contrary well confirmed, *viz.* that the law at Sinai was not set up by God as an Adam's covenant, to open the old way of righteousness and life by works; but was added to the promise, as subservient to Christ in its design and use, and consequently can never be a pure Adam's covenant of works. And, *secondly,*

That Abraham's covenant, Gen. xvii. is the very same covenant of grace we are now under; and, (2*dly*,) That circumcision in the nature of the act did not oblige all men to keep the whole law for righteousness. And (3*dly*,)

That the *new covenant* is not absolutely and wholly unconditional, though notwithstanding a most free and gracious covenant; the pillars on which Mr. Cary sets his new structure, sink under it, and the building falls into ruins.

I have not here taken Mr. Cary's two Syllogisms, proving Abraham's *covenant* to be a *covenant of works*, because I find myself therein prevented by that ingenious and learned man, Mr. Whiston, in his late answer to Mr. Grantham. Neither have I particularly spoken to his twenty-three arguments to prove the Sinai law to be a pure Adam's covenant, because *frustra fit per plura, quod fieri potest per pauciora:* I have overthrown them all together at one blow, by evincing every argument to have four terms in it, and so proves nothing. But I have spoken to all those scriptures which concern our four *positions*, and fully vindicated them from the injurious senses

to which Mr. Cary (following Mr. Tombes) had wrested them.

These things premised, I shall only further add, that if Mr. Cary shall attempt a reply to my answer, and free his own *theses* from the gross absurdities with which I have loaded them, he must plainly and substantially prove against me,

(1.) That the Sinai law, according to its true scope and end, was promulgated by God for man's justification and happiness in the way of personal obedience; and that the Jews, that did accordingly endeavour after righteousness by the works of the law, did not mistake its true end and meaning; or if they did, and thereby made it what God never intended it to be, a *covenant of works* to themselves, that the Sinai law ought rather to be denominated from their mistake and abuse of it, than from its primary and proper use, and God's design in its promulgation.

(2.) He must prove against me, with like evidence of truth, that circumcision discovered no more of man's native corruption, nor any more of his remedy by Christ; nor sealed to any person whatsoever the righteousness of faith, than Adam's covenant in paradise did; and that it did in its own nature oblige all upon whom it passed, to the same terms of obedience that Adam's covenant obliged him. And,

(3.) That there is not to be found in the *new covenant* any such act or duty of ours, as hath been described and limited above; which is of a suspending nature to the benefits therein granted. And,

(4.) That the respective expositions he gives of the several texts to be explained and vindicated, are more congruous to the scope and grammar than mine are; and more agreeable to the current sense of *orthodox expositors*; and then he shall be sure to receive an answerable return from me; else it is but labour lost to write again.

A REPLY TO Mr. PHILIP CARY's Solemn Call, &c.

THE book I have undertaken to animadvert briefly upon, bears the title of a *solemn call*; but I am not so much

concerned with the *ſolemnity*, as I am with the *authority* of this call. Not *how* it is, but *whoſe* it is. If it be the call of God, it muſt be obeyed, though it be to part not only with the *privileges*, but *lives* of our deareſt children; but then we had need to be very well aſſured it is the call of God, elſe we are guilty at once of the higheſt folly, and baſeſt treachery, to part with ſo rich an inheritance, conveyed by God's covenant with Abraham, to us believing Gentiles, and our ſeed, at Mr. Cary's call.

You direct your *Solemn Call to all that would be owned as Chriſt's faithful witneſſes.*

Here you are too obſcure and general: do you mean, all that would be owned by you, or by Chriſt? If you mean, that we muſt not expect to be owned by you till we renounce infants baptiſm, you tell us no news, for you have long ſince turned your back upon our miniſtry and aſſemblies: yet, methinks it is ſtrange, that we who were lately owned as Chriſt's faithful witneſſes under our late ſufferings, muſt now be diſowned by you, when we have liberty to amplify and confirm our teſtimony in the peaceful improvement of our common liberty.

But if your meaning be, (as I ſtrongly ſuſpect it is) that we muſt not expect to be owned by Chriſt, except we give up infants baptiſm; then, I ſay, it is the moſt uncharitable, as well as unwarrantable, and dangerous cenſure that ever dropt from the pen of a ſober Chriſtian. It is certainly your great evil to lay *ſalvation* itſelf on ſuch a point as the proper ſubject of baptiſm, and to make it *articulus ſtantis vel cadentis religionis*, the very *baſis* on which the whole Chriſtian religion, and its profeſſors ſalvation muſt ſtand. I hope the reſt of your brethren are more charitable than yourſelf; but however it be, I do openly profeſs, that I ever have, and ſtill do own you, and many more of your perſuaſion, for my brethren in Chriſt, and am perſuaded Chriſt will own you too, notwithſtanding your many errors and miſtakes about the leſſer and lower matters of religion. Nor need your cenſure much to affect us, as long as we are ſatisfied you have neither a faculty nor commiſſion thus ſolemnly to pronounce it upon us.

But what is the *condition* upon which this dreadful ſentence depends? why, it is our attendance or non-attendance to the primitive purity of the goſpel-doctrine.

Sir, I hope we do attend it, and, in ſome reſpects, better than ſome great pretenders to primitive purity, who have caſt off not only the initiating ſign of God's covenant, (this did not Abraham) but alſo that moſt comfortable and ancient ordinance

of *ſinging pſalms*; and what other primitive ordinance of God may be caſhiered next, who can tell?

We have a witneſs in our boſom, that the defence of *Chriſt's pure worſhip and inſtitution* hath coſt us ſomething; and as for me, were I convinced by all that you have here ſaid, or any of your friends, that in baptizing the infants of believers, we did really depart from the primitive purity, I would renounce it, and turn Anabaptiſt the ſame day.

But really, ſir, this diſcourſe of yours hath very much convinced me of the weakneſs and ſicklineſs of your cauſe, which is forced to ſeek a new foundation, and is here laid by you upon ſuch a foundation as muſt inevitably ruin it, if your party, as well as yourſelf, have but *reſolution* enough to venture it thereupon.

And it appears to me very probable, that they intend to fight us upon the new ground you have here choſen and marked out for them, by the high *encomiums* they give your *book* in their epiſtles to it, wherein they tell us, *your notions are of ſo rare a nature, that you are not beholden to any other for them*; and it is a wonder if you ſhould, for I think it never entered into any ſober Chriſtian's head before you, that Abraham's covenant, Gen. xvii. was the very ſame with Adam's covenant made in *paradiſe*; or that Moſes, Abraham, and all the elect of God in thoſe days were abſolutely under the very rigour and tyranny of the *covenant of works*, and at the ſame time under the *covenant of grace*; and all the bleſſings and privileges thereof; with many other ſuch rare *notions*, of which it is pity but you ſhould have the ſole propriety.

I am particularly concerned to detect your dangerous miſtakes, both in love to *your own ſoul*, and care of *my people's*, amongſt whom you have diſperſed them; though I foreſee by M. E's epiſtle to *your book*, what meaſure I am like to have for my plain and faithful dealing with you; for if that gentleman, upon a mere ſurmiſe and preſumption that one or other would *oppoſe your book*, dare adventure to call your unknown anſwerer, before he ever put pen to paper, *a man-pleaſer, a quarreller at reformation*, and rank him with the Papiſts, which oppoſed the faithful for their non-conformity to their inventions; what muſt I expect from ſuch raſh cenſurers, for my ſober, plain, and rational confutation of your errors?

As to the *controverſy betwixt us*, you truly ſay in your title page, and many parts of your *book*, and your brethren comprobate it in their epiſtles, that the main arguments made uſe of by the Pœdo-baptiſts, for the ſupport of their practice,

are taken from the covenant of God with Abraham, Gen. xvii. You call this the very hinge of the *controverſy*; and therefore if you can but prove this to be the very ſame *covenant of works* with that made with Adam in *paradiſe*, we ſhall then ſee what improvements you will quickly make of it.

Ay, ſir, you are ſenſible of the advantage, no leſs than a complete victory you ſhall obtain by it; and therefore being a more hardy and adventurous man than others, put deſperately upon it, (which never any before you durſt attempt) to prove Abraham's covenant, which ſtands ſo much in the way of your cauſe, to be a mere *covenant of works*, and therefore now aboliſhed.

My proper province is to diſcover here, that part of the *foundation* (I mean Abraham's *covenant*) whence our divines, with great ſtrength and evidence, deduce the right of believers infants to baptiſm now. Next, to evince the abſurdity of your aſſertions and arguments you bring to deſtroy it: And, laſtly, to reflect briefly upon the anſwers you give in the beginning of your *book*, to thoſe ſeveral texts of ſcripture pleaded by the learned and judicious divines you oppoſe, for the juſtification of *infants baptiſm*.

(1.) Thoſe that plead God's covenant with Abraham, Gen. xvii. as a ſcripture-foundation for baptizing believers infants under the goſpel, proceed generally upon theſe four grounds or principles.

(1.) That God's covenant with Abraham, Gen. xvii. was the ſame covenant for ſubſtance we Gentile believers are now under; and they ſubſtantially prove it from Luke i. from the 54th to the 74th verſe; which place evidently ſhews the ſameneſs of the covenant of grace they were, and we are now under; and from Matth. xxi. 41, 43. the ſame vineyard and kingdom the Jews then had, is now let out to us Gentiles; and from Rom. xi. that the Gentile Chriſtians are grafted into the ſame olive-tree, from which the Jews were broken off for their unbelief; and that the bleſſing of Abraham cometh now upon the Gentiles, Gal. iii. 8, 14, 16. And in a word, that the partition-wall betwixt them and us is now pulled down; and that we, through faith, are let into the ſelf-ſame covenant, and all the privileges they then enjoyed, Eph. ii. 13.

(2.) They aſſert and prove, That in Abraham's *covenant* the infant-ſeed were taken in with their parents, and that in token thereof, they were to have the ſign of the covenant applied to them, Gen. xvii. 9.

(3.) They affirm and prove, That the promiſe of God to Abraham and his ſeed, with the privileges thereof to his children, do, for the ſubſtance of them, deſcend to believers now, and their ſeed, Acts ii. 38, 39. and though the external ſign, *viz circumciſion*, be changed, yet baptiſm takes its place under the goſpel, Col. ii. 11, 12.

(4.) They conſtantly affirm, that none of thoſe grants or privileges made to the infant-ſeed of Abraham's family, were ever repealed or revoked by Chriſt or his apoſtles; and therefore believers children are now in the rightful poſſeſſion of them; and that therefore there needed no new command or promiſe: In Abraham's covenant we find our duty to ſign our children with the ſign of the covenant; and in Abraham's promiſe we find God's gracious grant to our children, as well as his, eſpecially ſince the apoſtle directs us, in this very reſpect, to the covenant of God with Abraham, Acts ii. 38, 39.

Theſe, ſir, are the principles on which we lay (as you ſay) great ſtreſs, and which to this day you have never been able to ſhake down; here therefore you attempt a new method to do it, by proving this covenant is now aboliſhed; and this is your method, in which you promiſe yourſelf great ſucceſs: Three things you pretend to prove;

(1.) That the Sinai covenant, Exod. xx.

(2.) That Abraham's covenant, Gen. xvii. are no goſpel-covenants; and that becauſe,

(3.) The goſpel-covenant is abſolute and unconditional.

How you come to hook in the Moſaic *covenant* into this controverſy, is not very evident, unleſs you think it were eaſy for you to prove that to be a *covenant of works*; and then Abraham's covenant, Gen. xvii. being an Old Teſtament covenant, were the more eaſily proved to be of the ſame nature. I am obliged to examine your three poſitions above noted, and if I evidence to the world the falſity of them, the cauſe you manage is ſo far loſt, and the right of believers infants to baptiſm ſtands firm upon its old and ſure foundation. I begin therefore with your

I. *Poſition.*

That the covenant made with Iſrael, on mount Sinai, is the very ſame covenant of works made with Adam in innocency, p. 122. and divers other places of your book, the very ſame.

Now, if I prove that this aſſertion of yours doth naturally and regularly draw many falſe and abſurd conſequents upon

you, which you are, and must be forced to own, then this your *position* cannot be true; for from true premisses, nothing but truth can naturally and regularly follow; but I shall make it plain to you, that this your position regularly draws many false conclusions, and gross absurdities, upon you; some of which you own expressly, and others you as good as own, being able to return nothing rational or satisfactory in your own defence against them.

(1.) From this assertion, that the Sinai *covenant* was a pure *covenant of works*, the very same with Adam's *covenant*, it regularly and necessarily follows, that either Moses and all Israel were damned, there being no salvation possible to be attained by that first covenant; or else, that there was a covenant of grace at the same time running parallel with that covenant of works; and so the elect people of God were at one and the same time under the first, as a covenant of death and condemnation; and under the second, as a covenant of grace and justification.

This *dilemma* pinches you. To assert, that Moses, and all the elect of God, under that dispensation, were damned, you dare not; and if you had, you must have expunged the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, and a great part of the New Testament, together with all your hopes of sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. The latter, therefore, (seeing you cannot avoid) you are forced upon, and in plain words yield it, p. 174, 175. 'That Moses, and 'the whole body of the children of Israel, without exception 'of any, were under, yea, absolutely under the severest pe'nalties of a dreadful curse; that the covenant they were un'der, could be no other than a covenant of works, a ministra'tion of death and condemnation; when yet it is also evident 'from the same holy scriptures of truth, that at the same time 'both Moses and all the elect among that people, were un'der a pure covenant of gospel-grace; and that these two co'venants were just the opposite the one to the other; but to 'this you have nothing to say, but with the apostle in another 'case, O the depth!'

Here, sir, you father a pure and perfect contradiction upon the holy scriptures, that it speaks things just opposite and contradictory one to the other, and of necessity one part or member of a contradiction must be false: this all the rational world knows; but so it is, say you, and fly to the infinite wisdom to reconcile them; for you say, You know not what to say to it. Just so the *papists* serve us in the *controversy* about *transubstan-*

tiation, when they cannot reconcile one thing with another, they fly to the omnipotent power to do it.

But, ſir, I wonder how you hold and hug a principle that runs naturally into ſuch groſs abſurdities: Do you ſee what follows from hence by unavoidable conſequence? You muſt, according to this principle, hold, That Moſes, and all God's peculiar elect people in Iſrael, muſt, during their life, hang mid-way between juſtification and condemnation; and, after death, between heaven and hell.

(1.) During life, they muſt hang mid-way between juſtification and condemnation; juſtified they could not be, for juſtification is the ſoul's paſſing from death to life, 1 John iii. 14. John v. 24. This they could not poſſibly do, for the miniſtration of *death* and *condemnation* hindred. He that is under *condemnation* by the law, cannot, during that ſtate, paſs into life. And yet to be under *condemnation* is as impoſſible on the other ſide; for he that is juſtified, cannot at the ſame time be under *condemnation*, Rom. viii. 2. John v. 24. What remains then, but that during life they muſt ſtick mid-way betwixt both, neither juſtified nor condemned; and yet both ſo and ſo. Juſtification is our life, and condemnation our death, in law: Betwixt theſe two, which are *privately oppoſed*, there can be no *medium* of participation, and yet ſuch a *medium* you here fancy.

(2.) And then after death they muſt neceſſarily hang betwixt heaven and hell; to heaven none can go that are under the very rigour and tyranny of the law, a pure *covenant of works*, as you ſay they were. To hell they could not go, being under the pure *covenant of grace*: What remains then, but ſome third ſtate muſt be aſſigned them? and ſo at laſt we have found the *limbus patrum*, and your poſition leads us right to *purgatory*: a concluſion which, I believe, you yourſelf abhor as much as I.

(2*dly*,) This hypotheſis pinches you with another *dilemma*, *viz.* Either there was pardon or repentance in Moſes's *covenant*, and the Sinai *diſpenſation of the law*, or there was none; if you ſay none, you directly contradict Lev. xxvi. 40, 46. if they were, then it cannot be Adam's *covenant of works*.

You anſwer, pag. 179. 'That God promiſeth pardon for 'the breach of Moſes's covenant, and of Adam's covenant too, 'but neither Adam's covenant, nor the Jewiſh legal covenant, 'promiſed any pardon upon repentance, but rather threatens 'and inflicts the contrary.'

Reply. Either this is a direct anſwer to my argument, to

prove the law at Sinai cannot be a pure Adam's *covenant*, becauſe it had a promiſe of pardon annexed to it, Lev. xxvi. 40. but Adam's *covenant* had none. If your anſwer be direct, then it is a plain contradiction in ſaying it had, and it had not a promiſe of pardon belonging to it. Or elſe it is a mere evaſion, and an eluding of the argument; and your only meaning is, that the relief I ſpeak of is not to be found in any promiſe belonging to the Sinai diſpenſation, but in ſome other goſpel covenant or promiſe. But, ſir, this will not ſerve your turn; you ſee I cite the very promiſe of grace made to the Iſraelities on mount Sinai by the hand of Moſes, wherein God promiſeth upon their humiliation, to remember his covenant for their good. Now, ſir, you had as good have ſtood to your firſt anſwer, which is leſs contradictory, as to this which is no leſs ſo; as will evidently appear, by a nearer and more particular view of the place, and gathering up your own conceſſions about it. That this text, Lev. xxvi. 40. hath the nature of a gracious goſpel promiſe in it, no man will deny, except he that will deny that God's remembring of his *covenant*, for the relief of poor broken-hearted ſinners, is no goſpel-promiſe pertaining to the covenant of grace: That it was made to the penitent Iſraelities upon *mount* Sinai, and there delivered them by the hand of Moſes for their relief, is as viſible and plain as the words and ſyllables of the 46th verſe are to him that reads them. Let the promiſe then be conſidered both ways. (1.) In your ſenſe, as a *plain direction to the covenant of grace made with Abraham for their relief*; for ſo you ſay it was, *p.* 180. or let it be conſidered abſolutely, as that which contained relief in itſelf for the penitent Iſraelites that ſhould live towards the end of the world, after they ſhould be gathered from all their diſperſions and captivities, as you there ſpeak, and more fully explicate in your accommodation of a parallel promiſe, *p.* 111, 112, 113. Firſt, let us view it in your ſenſe, as a *relative promiſe* to the *covenant of grace* made with Abraham. Gen. xii. to which, ſay you, it plainly directs them; and then this legal *diſpenſation* can never be the ſame with Adam's *covenant*, for to that *covenant* no ſuch promiſe was ever annexed, which ſhould guide and plainly direct them to Chriſt and pardon, as that ſtar which appeared to the wiſe men directed their way to Chriſt. If there be any ſuch relative promiſe belonging to Adam's *covenant* in *paradiſe*, as this which I plainly ſhew you was made on *mount* Sinai, be pleaſed to produce it, and you end the *controverſy*; but if you cannot, (as you know you cannot) then never ſay the legal diſpenſation at Sinai,

and the covenant of works with Adam in *paradiſe*, are the very ſame covenant. *Secondly*, Let us conſider this promiſe abſolutely in itſelf, and then I demand, was there mercy, relief and pardon contained in it for any penitent ſinner preſent or to come? Yes, ſay you, it extends relief to penitents, after God ſhall gather them from all their captivities at the end of the world; very good. Then it is a very vigorous promiſe of grace, which not only reaches 430 years backward, as far as the firſt promiſe to Abraham, but alſo extends its reliefs and and comforts many thouſand years forwards, even to the pureſt times of the goſpel, juſt before Chriſt coming to judgment: And can ſuch a promiſe as this be denied to be in itſelf a goſpel-promiſe? Sure it can neither be denied to be ſuch, nor yet to be made upon *mount* Sinai by the hand of Moſes. This *dilemma* is as pinching as the former.

Perhaps you'll ſay, This promiſe did not belong to the *moral law* given at Sinai, but to the *ceremonial law*: If ſo, then I ſhould reaſonably conclude, that you take the *ceremonial law* (of which you ſeem to make this a branch; *pag.* 181.) to be a covenant of grace, ſeeing one of its branches bears ſuch a gracious promiſe upon it. No, that muſt not be ſo neither; for ſay you, *p.* 151. the *ceremonial covenant* is of the ſame nature with the *covenant of works*, or law written in tables of ſtone: Whither then ſhall we ſend this promiſe? To the covenant of grace we muſt not ſend it, unleſs only as an *index* or finger to point to it, becauſe it was made upon *mount* Sinai, and delivered to Iſrael by the hand of Moſes: To the goſpel-covenant we muſt not therefore annex it; and to the legal diſpenſation at Sinai you are as loth to annex it, becauſe it contains ſo much relief and grace in it for poor penitents; and that will prove, that neither the *moral* nor *ceremonial law* (place it in which you pleaſe) can be a pure *covenant of works* as Adam's was.

Moreover, in making this the promiſe which muſt relieve and comfort the diſtreſſed Iſraelites in the pureſt goſpel-times, towards the end of the world, you as palpably contradict yourſelf in another reſpect; for we ſhall find you by and by ſtoutly denying, that the goſpel promiſes have any conditions or qualifications annexed to them; but ſo hath this, which you ſay relates to them that ſhall live at the end of the world. "If their uncircumciſed hearts be humbled, and if they accept "the puniſhment of their iniquites, then will I remember my covenant," *&c.* But be this promiſe conditional or abſolute,

two things are undeniably clear: (1.) That it is a promise full of grace, for the relief of law-transgressors, ver. 40. (2.) That it was a *mount* Sinai *promise*, ver. 46. And such a promise as you can never shew in Adam's covenant.

Besides, it is to me an unaccountable thing, that a promise which hath a double comfortable aspect, 430 years back, and some thousands of years forward, should not cast one comfortable glance upon the penitents of the present age, when it was made, nor upon any till near the end of the world. What think you, sir, of the 3000 Jews pricked at the heart, Acts ii. had they no relief from it, because their lot fell not late enough in time? Were the penitent Jews in Moses and Peter's days all born out of due time for this promise to relieve? O what shifting and shuffling is here! Who can think a man that twists and winds every way, to avoid the dint of an argument, can possibly have a moral assurance of the truth of his own opinion?

(3.) You say, *pag.* 134. 'That through Christ's satisfaction 'there is no repugnancy, or hostile contrariety, betwixt the law 'and promise, but an agreement betwixt them, and that they 'differ only in respect of strength and weakness; the gospel 'is able to go through-stitch with it, which the law cannot do.'

Reply. Well then, the law, considered as a covenant of works, whose terms or condition is, "Do this and live;" and the promise or gospel, whose condition is, "Believe and thou "shalt be saved;" are not specifically different, but only gradually, in point of strength and weakness: and the reason you give is as strange, that *this comes to pass through the satisfaction of Christ.* Good sir, enlighten us in this rare notion. Did Christ die to purchase a reconciliation betwixt the covenant of works as such, and the covenant of grace, as if both were now by the death of Christ agreed, and to be justified by works and by faith, should, after Christ's death, make no odds or difference between them? If it be so, why have you kept such a coil to prove Moses's and Adam's covenant, yea, Abraham's too, being a *covenant of works*, can never consist or mingle with the *gospel-covenant?* And then I say, you contradict the *apostle*, who so directly opposes the *covenant of works* as such, to the *covenant of grace*, Gal. iii. 18. and tells us they are utterly inconsistent and exclusive of each other; and this he spake after Christ's death and actual satisfaction. But,

(4.) That which more amazes me, is the strange answer you give to Mr. Sedgwick, *p.* 132, 133. In your return to his argument, 'That if the law and the promise can consist, then

'the law cannot be ſet up as a covenant of works. *You anſwer*, 'That the law and the promiſe having divers ends, it doth not 'thence follow, that there is an inconſiſtence betwixt them, 'and that the law, even as it is a covenant of works, inſtead of 'being againſt the promiſe, tends to the eſtabliſhment of it. 'And *p.* 133. that by convincing men of the impoſſibility of 'obtaining reſt and peace in themſelves, and the neceſſity of 'betaking themſelves to the promiſe, *&c.* the law is not againſt 'the promiſe, having ſo *bleſſed a ſubſerviency* towards the eſta-'bliſhment thereof.' Here you own a *ſubſervieney*, yea, *a bleſſed ſubſervieney* of the law to the promiſe, which is that Mr. Sedgwick and myſelf have urged to prove it cannot be ſo, as it is a pure Adam's covenant, but that therefore it muſt come under another conſideration; only here we differ; you ſay it hath a *bleſſed ſubſerviency* to the promiſe, as it is the ſame with Adam's covenant; we ſay it can never be ſo as ſuch, but as it is either a covenant of grace, tho' more obſcure, as he ſpeaks; or though the matter of it ſhould be the ſame with Adam's covenant, yet it is ſubſerviently a covenant of grace, as others ſpeak; and under no other conſideration can it be reconciled to the promiſe.

But will you ſtand to this, that the law hath no hoſtile contradiction to the promiſe, but a *bleſſed ſubſerviency* to it, as you ſpeak, *p.* 173. where you ſay, 'That if we preach up the 'law as a covenant of life, or a covenant of faith and grace '(which are equipollent terms) let us diſtinguiſh as we pleaſe 'between a covenant of grace *abſolutely* and *ſubſerviently* ſuch; 'then we make an ill uſe of the law, by perverting it to ſuch a 'ſervice as God never intended it for, and are guilty of mingling 'law and goſpel, life and death together.'

Reply. Here, ſir, my underſtanding is perfectly poſed, and I know not how to make any tolerable orthodox ſenſe out of this poſition: Is the law preached up as a pure *covenant of works*, (that is, preſſing men to the perſonal and punctual obedience of it, in order to their juſtification by works) no way repugnant to the promiſe, but altogether ſo, when preached in ſubſerviency to Chriſt and faith? This is new divinity with me, and I believe muſt be ſo to every intelligent reader. Do not I oppoſe the promiſe, when I preach up the law as a pure covenant of works, which therefore as ſuch muſt be excluſive of Chriſt and the promiſe? And do I oppoſe either, when I tell ſinners the terrors of the law ſerve only to drive them to Chriſt, their only remedy, who is "the end of the law "for righteouſneſs, to every one that believeth," Rom. x: 4.

Are works and grace more consistent than grace with grace? Explain your meaning in this *paradoxical expression*, and leave not yourself and others in such a maze. I read, Gal. iii. 19. for what end God published the law 430 years after the promise was made to Abraham, and find *it was added because of transgression*, προσετεθη, it was put to, not set up by itself alone as a distinct covenant, but added as an *appendix* to the *covenant of grace*; whence it is plain, that God added the Sinai *law* to the *promise*, with *evangelical ends and purposes*. If then I preach the law to the very same evangelical uses and purposes for which God added it to the promise, do I therein make an ill use of the law, and mingle life and death together? But preaching it, as a pure *covenant of works*, as it holds forth justification to sinners by obedience to its precepts, do I then make it blessedly subservient (as you speak) to the *promise* or *covenant of grace*? The law was added because of transgression, that is, to restrain sin in the world, and to convince sinners under guilt, of the necessity of another righteousness than their own, even that of Christ, and for the same ends God added it to the promise. I always did, and still shall preach it, and I am persuaded, without the least danger of mingling law and gospel, life and death together, in your sense.

It is plain to me, that in the publication of the law on Sinai, God did not in the least intend to give them so much as a *direction* how to obtain justification by their most punctual obedience to its precepts, that being to fallen man utterly impossible; and beside, had he promulged the law to that end and purpose, he had not added it, but directly opposed it to the promise; which it is manifested he did not; Gal. iii. 21. "Is the law then against the promise of God? God forbid." And verse 18. makes it appear, that had it been set up to that end and purpose, it had utterly disannulled the promise; for *if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more by promise*. What then can be clearer, than that the law at Sinai was published with gracious gospel-ends and purposes, to lead men to Christ, which Adam's covenant had no respect or reference to? And therefore it can never be a pure Adam's *covenant*, as you falsely call it; neither is it capable of becoming a pure *covenant of works* to any man, but by his own fault, in rejecting the righteousness of Christ, and seeking justification by the works of the law, as the mistaken carnal Jews did, Rom. x. 3. and other legal justiciaries now do. And upon this account only it is that Paul, who so highly praises the law in its subserviency

to Christ, thunders so dreadfully against it, as it is thus set by ignorant mistaken souls in direct opposition to Christ.

(5*thly*,) And further, to clear this point, the apostle tells us, Rom. x. 4. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness "to every one that believeth." Whence I argue, That if Adam's *covenant* had an end, namely, the justification of men by their own personal obedience; and the law at Sinai had a quite contrary end, namely, to bring *sinners* to Christ by faith for their righteousness; the one to keep him within himself, the other to take him quite out of himself, and bring him for his justification to the righteousness of another, even that of Christ; then that Sinai *law* cannot possibly be the same thing with Adam's *covenant of works*. But the antecedent is true and plain in the forecited text, therefore so is the consequent, *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness*. Take the law here either more strictly, for the *moral law*, or more largely, as it comprehends the *ceremonial law*, still *Christ is the end of the law*. The moral law shuts up every man to Christ for righteousness, by convincing him (according to God's design in the publication of it) of the impossibility of obtaining justification in the way of works.

And the *ceremonial law* many ways prefigured Christ, his death and satisfaction, by blood, in our room, and so led men to Christ, their true propitiation; and all its types were fulfilled and ended in Christ. Was there any such thing in Adam's *covenant*? You must prove there was, else you will never be able to make them one and the same *covenant*.

(6*thly*,) It seems exceeding probable from Acts vii. 37, 38. that the Sinai *covenant* was delivered to Moses by Jesus Christ, there called *the angel*. "This is he that was in the church in the "wilderness, with the Angel that spake to him in the mount "Sinai, and with our fathers, who received the lively oracles "to give unto us." Now, if Christ himself were the Angel, and the precepts of the law delivered by him to Moses were the *lively oracles of God*, as they are expressly affirmed to be; then the law delivered on mount Sinai cannot be a pure Adam's *covenant of works*: for it is never to be imagined, that Jesus Christ himself should deliver to Moses such a covenant, directly opposite to all the ends of his future incarnation; and that those precepts (which, if they were of the same nature, and revived to the same end, at which Adam's covenant directly aimed) should be called the *lively oracles of God*; when contrariwise, upon your supposition, they could be no other than a ministration of condemnation and death: but that they were *lively*,

packs, viz. in their design and intention, is plain in the text; and that they were delivered to Moses by Jesus Christ, the *angel* of the *covenant*, seems more than probable, by comparing it with the former verses.

(7*thly*,) Neither is it easy to imagine how such a *covenant*, which by the fall of Adam had utterly lost all its promises, privileges, and blessings, and could retain nothing but the curses and punishments annexed to it, in case of the least failure, could possibly be numbred among the chief privileges in which God's Israel gloried; as it apparently was, Rom. ix. 4. "Who "are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the "glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and "the service of God, and the promises."

These things considered, with many more (which the intended brevity of this discourse will not now admit) I am fully satisfied of the falsity of your *position*, and so may you too, when you shall review the many gross and palpable absurdities with which I have clogged and loaded it, with many more, regularly and fairly deducible from it; which I could easily produce, did I not suspect these I have produced, have already prest your patience a little too far: but if ever I shall see (which I never expect) a fair and scriptural solution of these weighty objections, you may expect from me more arguments against your unsound *position*, which, at the present, I judge needless to add.

To conclude: These *premises* (as before I noted) can never be true, from whence such, and so many gross and notorious absurdities are regularly and unavoidably deducible. For *ex veris nil nisi verum*, from true premises nothing but truth can regularly follow.

Had you minded those things which I seasonably sent you, you had avoided all those bogs into which you are now sunk, and been able fairly to reconcile all those seeming contradictions in Paul's *epistles*, with respect to the law at Sinai: But, however, by what hath been said, your first position, *That the Sinai covenant is the same covenant of works with Adam's in paradise*, vanishes before the evidence of scripture, truth, and sound reason.

But yet, tho' what I have said destroys your false position, I am not willing to leave you, or the reader ignorant, wherein the truth lies in this controverted point betwixt us; and that will appear, by a due consideration of the following particulars.

(1.) It is plain and uncontroverted, that Adam's covenant in *paradise*, contained in it a perfect law and rule of natural righ-

teousneſs, founded both in God's nature, and in man's; which, in its perfect ſtate of *innocency*, was every way enabled perfectly to comply therewith: For the ſcripture tells us, Eccl. vii. 29. That *God made man upright*; and his punctual complying therewith, was the righteouſneſs by which he ſtood.

(2.) This *covenant of works* being once broken, can never more be available to the juſtification and ſalvation of any fallen man. There was not now a law found that could give righteouſneſs: The broken *covenant of works* loſt immediately all the bleſſings and privileges which before it contained, and retained only the *curſe* and *puniſhment*; in token whereof, *cherubims*, with flaming ſwords, turning every way, were ſet to keep the way of the tree of life, Gen. iii. 24.

(3.) Soon after the violation of the *covenant of works*, God was graciouſly pleaſed to publiſh for the relief of mankind, now miſerable and hopeleſs, the *ſecond covenant*, which we call the *covenant of grace*, Gen. iii. 15. which is the firſt opening of the grace of God in Chriſt to fallen man. And tho' this firſt promiſe of Chriſt was but ſhort and obſcure, yet it was in every age to be opened clearer and clearer, until the promiſed ſeed ſhould come. After the firſt opening of this new covenant, in the firſt promiſe of Chriſt, the firſt covenant is ſhut up for ever, as a covenant of life and ſalvation; and all the world are ſhut up to the only way of ſalvation by Chriſt, Gal. iii. 23. It being contrary to the will of God, that two ways of ſalvation ſhould ſtand open to man at once, and they ſo oppoſite one to another, as the way of works, and the way of faith are, Acts iv. 12. John xiv. 6. Gal. ii. 21.

(4.) It is evident, however, that after the firſt opening of the promiſe of Chriſt, Gen. iii. 15. God foreſeeing the pride of fallen man, who naturally inclines to a righteouſneſs of his own in the way of doing, was pleaſed to revive the law of nature, as to its matter, in the Sinai diſpenſation; which was 430 years after the firſt promiſe had been renewed, and further opened unto Abraham, of whoſe ſeed Chriſt ſhould come: And this he did, not in oppoſition to the promiſe, but in ſubſerviency thereto, Gal. iii. 21. And though the matter and ſubſtance of the law of nature be found in the Sinai covenant, ſtrictly taken for the *ten commandments*; yet the ends and intentions of God in that terrible Sinai diſpenſation were twofold: (1.) To convince fallen man of the *ſinfulneſs* and *impotency* of his nature, and the impoſſibility of obtaining righteouſneſs by the law, and ſo by a bleſſed neceſſity, to ſhut him up to Chriſt, his only remedy. And, (2.) To be a ſtanding

rule of duty, both towards God and man, to the end of the world. But if we take the Sinai *covenant* more largely, as inclusive of the *ceremonial* with the *moral law* (as it is often taken, and is so by you, in the New Testament;) then it did not only serve for a *conviction* of impotency, and a *rule* of duty; but exhibited and taught much of Christ, and the mysteries of the new covenant in those its ceremonies, wherein he was prefigured to them.

(5.) Whence it evidently appears, that the Sinai *covenant* was neither repugnant to the *new covenant* in its scope and aim; "The law is not against the promise," Gal. iii. 21. nor yet set up as co-ordinate with it, with a design to open two different ways of salvation to fallen man; but was added to the promise in respect of its *evangelical* purposes and designs: On which account it is called by some a covenant of faith, or grace, in respect of its subserviency unto Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness, Rom. x. 4. and by others a subservient covenant, according to Gal. iii. 23, 24. And accordingly we find both tables of the law put into the ark, Heb. ix. 4. which shews their consistency and subordination with, and to the method of salvation by Christ in the *new covenant*.

(6.) This design and intention of God was fatally mistaken by the Jews, ever since God promulged that law at Sinai, and was by them notoriously perverted to a quite contrary end to that which God promulged it for, even to give righteousness and life, in the way of personal and perfect obedience; Rom. x. 3. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." Hence Christ came to be slighted by them, and his righteousness rejected: For they rested in the law, Rom. ii. 17. were married to the law, as an husband, Rom. vii. 2, 3. and so might have no conjugal communion with Christ. However, Moses, Abraham, and all the elect, discerned Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, and were led to him thereby.

(7.) This fatal mistake of the use and intent of the law, is the ground of those seeming contradictions, in Paul's epistles. Sometimes he magnifies the law, when he speaks of it according to God's end and purpose in its promulgation, Rom. vii. 12, 14, 16. But as it was fatally mistaken by the Jews, and set in opposition to Christ; so he thunders against it, calls it a *ministration of death* and *condemnation*; and all its appendant ceremonies *weak and beggarly elements*. And by this distinction, whatsoever seems repugnant in Paul's epistles, may be

ſweetly reconciled: and it is a diſtinction of his own making; 1 Tim. i. 8. "We know that the law is good, if we uſe it lawfully." There is a good and an evil uſe of the law. Had you attended to theſe things, you had not ſo confidently and inconſiderately pronounced it a pure *covenant of works*.

Rom. x. 3. Rom. ii. 13.

II. *Poſition.*

Secondly, You affirm with like confidence, *That the covenant of circumciſion is alſo the ſame; viz. the covenant of works made with Adam in paradiſe.*

This I utterly deny; and will try whether you have any better ſucceſs in the proof of your ſecond, than you had in your firſt *poſition*. And to convince you of your miſtake, let us conſider what the general nature of this ordinance of *circumciſion* was; what its ends were; and then prove, That it cannot be what you affirm it to be, the very ſame *covenant* God made with Adam before the fall, but muſt needs be a *covenant of grace*.

(1.) *Circumciſion*, in its general nature, was, (1.) An *ordinance* of God's own inſtitution, in the 99th year of Abraham's age; at which time of its inſtitution, God renewed the *covenant* with him, Gen. xvii. 9, 10. (2.) That it conſiſted (as all ſacraments do) of an external ſign, and a ſpiritual myſtery ſignified thereby. The external part of it (which we call the ſign) was the cutting off the fore-ſkin of the genital part of the Hebrew males, on the eighth day from their birth. The ſpiritual myſtery thereby ſignified and repreſented, was the cutting off the filth and guilt of ſin from their ſouls, by regeneration and juſtification, called "the circumciſion of the heart," Deut. x. 16. And though this was laid upon them by the command, as their duty, yet a gracious promiſe of power from God to perform that duty, was added to the command; Deut. xxx. 6. "The Lord thy God will circumciſe thy heart to love him," *&c.* juſt as promiſes of grace in the New Teſtament are added to commands of duty. (3.) Betwixt this viſible outward ſign, and ſpiritual myſtery, there was a *ſacramental relation*; from which relation it is called the "token of the covenant," Gen. xvii. 12. "The ſign and ſeal of the covenant," Rom. iv. 11. Yea, "the covenant itſelf," Acts vii. 8.

(2.) Next, let us conſider the ends for which *circumciſion* was inſtituted and ordained of God: Of which theſe were the principal.

(1.) It was inſtituted to be a *convictive ſign* of their natural corruption, propagated by the way of natural generation: For which reaſon, this natural corruption goes in ſcripture

under the name of the *uncircumcision of the heart*, Jer. ix. 26.

(2.) It also signified the putting off of this body of sin, in the virtue of Christ's death, Col. ii. 11.

(3.) It was appointed to be the initiating sign of the covenant, or a token of their *matriculation*, and admission into the church and covenant of God, Gen. xvii. 9, 10, 11.

(4.) It was ordained to be a discriminating mark betwixt God's covenanted people, and the Pagan world, who were strangers to the covenant, and without God in the world. And accordingly both parties were, from this ordinance, denominated the *circumcision*, and the *uncircumcision*, Col. iii. 11.

(5.) It was also an obliging sign to Abraham and his seed, to walk with God in the uprightness and sincerity of their hearts, in the performance of all covenanted duties; in which duties, Abraham, and the faithful, walked *obediently* with God, looking to Christ for righteousness: but the carnal Jews resting in, and trusting to those duties and ordinances for righteousness and justification, made it a covenant of works to themselves, and circumcision itself a *bond* of that *covenant*.

(6.) Now, forasmuch as *circumcision* prefigured Christ, who was to come of this holy circumcised seed of Abraham, and his death also was pointed at therein, Heb. ii. 16. Col. ii. 11. of necessity this ordinance must vanish at the death of Christ; and accordingly did so.

These things duly pondered, how irrational is it to imagine this *covenant of circumcision* to be the very same with the *paradisical covenant?* Did that *covenant* discover native corruption, and direct to its remedy in Christ, as this did? Surely it gave not the least glimpse of any such thing. Did that *covenant* separate and distinguish one person from another, as this did? No, no; it left all under equal and comon misery, Eph. ii. 3.

Had Adam's covenant a seal of the righteousness of faith annexed to it, as this had? Rom. iv. 11. "He received circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith." The righteousness of faith is evangelical righteousness; and this *circumcision* sealed. Say not it was to Abraham only that it sealed it; for it is an injurious restriction put upon the seal of a *covenant*, which extended to the *fathers* as well as to Abraham, Luke i. 72. But you admit, however, that it sealed evangelical righteousness to Abraham: but I hope you will not say, that a seal of the *covenant of works* ever did, or could, seal evangelical righteousness to any individual person in the world. So then,

turn which way you will, this truth ſtill follows you, and will faſten upon you, that the *covenant of circumciſion* was not a pure *covenant of works*, but a *goſpel-covenant*. Which I thus prove:

Argument I.

If *circumciſion* be a part of the *ceremonial law*, and the *ceremonial law* was dedicated by blood, and whatſoever is ſo dedicated, is by you confeſſed to be no part of the *covenant of works*; then *circumciſion* is no part of the *covenant of works*, even by your own confeſſion. But it is; *ergo*,

That it is a part of the *ceremonial law*, was never doubted, or denied by any man: that it was dedicated by blood, and therefore no part of the *moral law*, you yourſelf not only acknowledge, but vehemently plead for it, *p.* 148, where you blame Mr. Sedgwick with ſome ſharpneſs, and unbecoming reflection, for making no diſtinction betwixt the *ceremonial covenant*, which was dedicated by blood, and the law written in tables of ſtone; which was not ſo dedicated, and therefore could not be the ſame with the *moral law*, which you make the *covenant of works*; telling him, that this dedication by blood ought to diſtinguiſh it from the *moral law*, or *Sinai covenant* of works, as you ſay it doth, and ought to do; how then can *circumciſion* be the ſame with, and yet quite another thing from the *Sinai covenant*? Was the ceremonial law dedicated by blood? Yes, the apoſtle plainly aſſerts it, from Exod. xxiv. 7, 8. "Moſes took the book of the covenant, and Heb. ix. 18, 19. "read it in the audience of the people; "and took the blood, and ſprinkled it upon the people, and "ſaid, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath "made with you, concerning theſe things." But what kind of covenant then was this covenant that was ſprinkled with blood? You tell us, *p.* 147, it could not poſſibly be the law written in ſtones, (which you make the *covenant of works*); but was indeed another covenant, delivered at a diſtinct ſeaſon, and in a diſtinct method. What covenant then muſt this be, ſeeing it could not poſſibly (as you ſay) be the Sinai *covenant* written in ſtones? It muſt either be the *covenant of grace*, or none. No, ſay you, that it was not, neither; for it was of the ſame nature with, and is no other than a *covenant of works*, *p.* 151. It was the ſame, and yet could not poſſibly be the ſame.

Mr. Sedgwick, that learned and grave divine, is checked, *p.* 148, for confounding the *ceremonial law* that was ſprinkled with blood, with the *moral law* (which you call the *covenant of works*) that was not ſprinkled with blood; and ſay you, *p.*

147, *It could not poſſibly be the ſame.* And then, *p.* 151, you ſay, *It is clear, theſe two,* viz. *the* moral *and* ceremonial law, *were both of the ſame nature; that is, no other than a* covenant of works. How doth this hang together? Pray reconcile it, if you can. You ſay, *It is an ungrounded ſuppoſition of* Mr. Sedgwick's, *that that* covenant *which was ſo confirmed by blood, muſt of neceſſity be confirmed by the blood of Chriſt alſo;* p. 148. But, ſir, the truth you oppoſe, *viz.* That the book of the *ceremonial law* was ſprinkled by typical blood, and therefore confirmed by the blood of Chriſt, for the time it was to continue, ſhines like a bright ſun-beam in your own eyes, from Heb. ix. 14, 23. Was not the blood that ſprinkled this law, the figure or type of Chriſt's own blood? Whoſe blood was it then, if not Chriſt's? How dare you call this an ungrounded ſuppoſition? Was not that blood typical blood? And what, I pray you, was the *antitype*, but Chriſt's blood? And did not the holy Ghoſt ſignify the one by the other? Heb. ix. 8. I ſtand amazed at theſe things! You diſtinguiſh, and confound all again. You ſay, it could not poſſibly be the ſame with the law written in ſtone: and you ſay, it is clear both were of the ſame nature, no other than a *covenant of works.* At this rate you may ſay what you pleaſe; for I ſee *contradiction* is no crime in your book.

Argument II.

If *circumciſion* was the ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith, it did not pertain to the *covenant of works;* for the righteouſneſs of *faith* and *works* are oppoſites, and belong to two contrary *covenants.*

But *circumciſion* was the ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith; Rom. iv. 11. "He (*i. e.* Abraham) received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith." Therefore it pertains not to the *covenant of works*, but *grace.*

A man would think it impoſſible to evade ſo clear and ſcriptural an argument as this is. The *major propoſition* is even ſelf-evident and undeniable; the *minor*, the plain words of the *apoſtle.*

And what is your reply to this? Certainly as ſtrange a one as ever I met with; *p.* 105. you ſay, *It is true, circumciſion was a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith to Abraham; but it was ſo to him only in his extraordinary circumſtances; but it was not ſo to any of his natural ſeed in its ordinary uſe.*

I cannot deny but I have met with ſuch an aſſertion before in Mr. Tombes; and I can tell you too, that Bellarmine invented it before Mr. Tombes was born, and that Dr. Ames fully

confuted it in his third tome *p.* 27. proving, that there was no extraordinary cauſe on Abraham's account, why God ſhould juſtify or ſeal him more than any other believer; and that Abraham had nothing to glory in before God. But to reſtrain, as you do, the public ſeal of a covenant, that comprehended and equally concerned the whole *church* and *people* of God, to one ſingle perſon; ſo that neither Iſaac nor Jacob, who were by name enrolled in that great charter, ſhould have any right to the ſeal of it, is ſuch a conceit as amazes an intelligent reader. We know Abraham was the firſt that received it, but utterly deny that he received it only for himſelf; but he received it as the father of all them that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, as the very next words tell us, "He received it, that he might "be the father of all them that believe;" that is, for himſelf, and all his ſpiritual children. One half of this ſacrament of *circumciſion* you allow, *p.* 205. to the reſt that were under it, *viz.* to be *a ſign of the covenant*; but the other half you cut off, and ſay, it was only a *ſeal* to him. What good vouchers have you for this expoſition of the text? Have you the concurrence of *orthodox expoſitors?* Or is it the raſh and bold adventure of your own head? I am ſure it no ways agrees with the drift and ſcope of the Apoſtle's argument, which evidently is to prove, that both Jews and Gentiles are juſtified by faith, as Abraham was; and that the ground of juſtification and bleſſedneſs is common both to the uncircumciſed Gentiles, and circumciſed Jews; and that Abraham and all other believers, have but one way of juſtification, and ſalvation, and that how great ſoever Abraham was, in this caſe he hath found nothing whereof to glory, ver. 1, 2. And is not your expoſition a notable one, to prove the community of the privilege of juſtification, becauſe the ſeal of it was peculiar to Abraham alone? Rectify it, and better conſider it.

Argument III.

In the covenant of circumciſion, Gen. xvii. God makes over himſelf to Abraham and his ſeed to be their God, or give them a ſpecial intereſt in himſelf.

But in the *covenant of works*, God doth not, ſince the fall, make over himſelf to any, to be their God by way of ſpecial intereſt.

Therefore the *covenant of circumciſion* cannot be the *covenant of works.*

This is ſo plain and clear, that none can doubt or deny it, that underſtands the nature of the two covenants. And now, ſir, what courſe do you take to avoid this argument? Such a

one ſure as no man that ever I met with took before you, and that is this; you boldly cut Abraham's covenant, Gen. xvii. into two parts, and make the firſt to be the pure covenant of grace, which is the promiſſory part, to the *ninth verſe*; and the *reſtipulation* (as you call it, *p.* 205.) to be as pure a covenant of works. What hard ſhift will ſome men make to maintain their opinion! You ſay truly, *p.* 205, that at the *ſeventh* and *eighth verſes* was their reſtipulation: why then do you ſay, *p.* 224, that at *ver.* the *7th* he proceeds to ſpeak of another *covenant* than what he had been ſpeaking of before? Does the promiſe and the reſtipulation make two *covenants*; or are they juſt and neceſſary parts of one and the ſame *covenant*? You alſo tell us, that the *covenant*, Gen. xvii. 1, 2, 3, 4. was a plain tranſcript of ſeveral free promiſes of the goſpel under the denomination of a *covenant*. But why then don't you take the reſtipulation, *ver.* 7, 8, 9, 10. to be a part of it? O no; there is ſomething required on Abraham's and his poſterity's part; they muſt be *circumciſed*, and that ſpoils all. Why but, ſir, if the requiring of *circumciſion* alters the caſe ſo greatly, as to make it a quite contrary *covenant*; how comes it to paſs, that in the *covenant* to Abraham, he himſelf was firſt required to be *circumciſed*? Why, this is the reaſon; here is ſomewhat required on their part as a *condition*; and a *condition* quite alters the nature of the *covenant*. Very well; but tell me then why you ſay, *p.* 223, and in many other places, that the *covenant* made with Abraham, in Gen. xii. was a *goſpel covenant*; and yet there Abraham is obliged to walk before God, and be perfect? Does not that alſo there alter the nature of the *covenant*, as well as here in the *ſeventeenth* chapter? You alſo grant, the *covenant* made with Abraham, Gen. xxii. was a pure *goſpel-covenant*; or if you deny it, the apoſtle proves it, Heb. vi. 13. And yet there is more appearance of reſpect to Abraham's obedience in that *covenant*, than is in ſubmitting to *circumciſion*: ſee Gen. xxii. 16, 17. "By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith the Lord; "for becauſe thou haſt done this thing, *&c.* That in bleſſing, "I will bleſs thee; and in multiplying, I will multiply thee."

I will trouble you, on this head, but with one *query* more: if the four firſt verſes of the xvii. of Geneſis contain a pure goſpel-covenant, as you ſay, and the reſtipulation in the following verſes make a covenant of works, becauſe it thereby becomes conditional; then tell me, if you pleaſe, whether what God graciouſly granted to Abraham in the former verſes be not all nulled, and made void again by their reſtipulation? Does not this ſeem hard? Here you have brought Abraham,

Iſaac, and Jacob, and all the believers of Abraham's race, juſt into the ſame caſe you brought Moſes and all the Iſraelites before, under two oppoſite covenants, where one cuts off all that the other granted.

But there is a ſtronger reaſon urged than the *conditionality* of the covenant, to prove it a *covenant of works*; and that is, *circumciſion* is made the *condition* of Abraham's *covenant*; and that is the worſt of all *conditions*, for it obliges a man to keep the whole law, Gal. v. 3. it is the yoke of bondage, and to whatſoever covenant it be ſo annexed, it makes it become a *bondage legal covenant*. "If we be circumciſed, Chriſt ſhall "profit us nothing." Thus it was in the covenant, Gen. xvii.

Great uſe is made of this in many parts of your diſcourſe. But, ſir, you are greatly miſtaken in applying theſe texts to the purpoſes you do; for the apoſtle all along in that epiſtle to the Galatians, argues againſt the falſe teachers, who taught and preſſed the neceſſity of circumciſion, as a bond obliging them to the ſtrict and perfect obedience of the law, in order to their juſtification thereby, or at leaſt to join it with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as a *con-cauſe of juſtification*; ſee Gal. ii. 4, 5. and iii. 1. Now againſt this abuſe of circumciſion it is that the apoſtle argues thus, and tells them, that in ſubmitting to it on that account, they made the death of Chriſt of no effect, and obliged themſelves by it to the whole law; for circumciſion did not ſimply and abſolutely, in the nature of the work or action, oblige men to the whole law in the way of juſtification by it, but it did ſo from the intention of the worker, and the ſuppoſition of ſuch an opinion of it, and deſign in it, for in itſelf, and with reſpect to God's deſign in the inſtitution of it; it was to be a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith, Rom. iv. 11. and ſo it was an excellent, uſeful, inſtructive ordinance to all believers, as long as the ceremonial law ſtood; and even when it was expiring, as the goſpel began to open more and more clearly, there was yet ſome kind of toleration of it to ſuch as were born of Jewiſh parents: Thus Paul himſelf circumciſed Timothy, his mother being a Jeweſs, Acts xvi. 1, 3. but Titus, being a Greek, was not circumciſed, and that becauſe of theſe falſe teachers, that would make an ill uſe of that their liberty, Gal. ii. 3, 4. This Paul could never have done, in caſe circumciſion, in the nature of the act, had bound Timothy to keep the law for juſtification. By which it appears, that the action in its own nature did not oblige to the keeping of the whole law, but from the intention of the agent; and therefore, as the apoſtle

rightly argues, if a man be circumciſed with a deſign to be juſtified by it, he would thereby bind himſelf to the whole law, and fruſtrate the death of Chriſt to himſelf; but it was now to have its funeral with all other parts of the ceremonial law, which vaniſhed, and were accompliſhed in the death of Chriſt; and it falling out that ſuch a vile uſe was made of it at that time, the apoſtle thus thunders againſt it. Had this been obſerved, as alſo the like abuſe of the *moral law*, you would have known how to have reconciled the apoſtle's *encomiums* of them both, with his ſharp invectives againſt the one and the other. But being ignorant of theſe two great and neceſſary diſtinctions of the law, according to God's intention in the promulgation of it at Sinai, and the carnal Jews *ſenſe* of it, as a pure *covenant of works*, againſt which the apoſtle ſo ſharply inveighs in the places by you cited, all your 23 arguments from page 183, to page 187, fall to the ground at one ſtroke; your *medius terminus* having one ſenſe in your *major propoſition*, and another in your *minor*; and ſo every argument hath four *terms* in it, as will eaſily be evinced by the particular conſideration of the reſpective places from whence you draw them.

So in like manner, in your arguing here againſt *circumciſion*, as a bond to keep the whole law, and as ſuch vacating the death of Chriſt, is a ſtumble at the ſame ſtone, not diſtinguiſhing as you ought to have done, betwixt an obligation ariſing out of the nature of the work, and out of the end and intention of the workers; and this every learned and judicious eye will eaſily diſcern. But we proceed to

Argument IV.

That which in its direct and primary end teacheth man the corruption of his nature by ſin, and the mortification of ſin by the Spirit of Chriſt, cannot be a condition of the *covenant of works*; but ſo did circumciſion in the very direct and primary end of it.

This ordinance ſuppoſeth the fall of man, points to the *means* and *inſtruments* of his ſin and miſery, and alſo to the remedy thereof by Chriſt: (1.) It ſingles out that *genital part* by which original ſin was propagated, Gen. xvii. 11. Pſal. li. 1. To this the ſign of the covenant is applied in *circumciſion*, for the remiſſion of ſins paſt, and the extirpation of ſin for the future. (2.) Therefore it was inſtituted of God, that men might ſee both the neceſſity and true way of mortifying their luſts, in the virtue of Chriſt's death and reſurrection, whereof baptiſm, that ſucceeds it, is a ſign now, as *circumciſion* was then; as is plain from Col. ii. 11, 12. "In whom al-

" ſo ye are circumciſed with the circumciſion made without " hands, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh by the " circumciſion of Chriſt, buried with him in baptiſm, where- " in alſo ye are riſen with him, through the faith of the ope- " ration of God, who raiſed him from the dead." It is clear then that circumciſion directed men to the death and reſurrection of Chriſt, as the true and only means of mortifying their luſts; and if it did ſo, ſure it was not the *covenant of works*, for that gives fallen man no hint of a remedy. (3.) It was alſo a *diſcriminating ſign* or *token*, betwixt the *church* and the *world*: God's people, and the heathens, who were accordingly denominated from it, the *circumciſion* and the *uncircumciſion*, the *holy ſeed* and the Gentiles; and now under the New Teſtament, the children of Abraham by faith, and the children of the *fleſh*: This alſo ſhews it cannot be the *covenant of works*; for in that covenant all are equally and alike concluded under ſin and miſery, Eph. ii. 3. and there is no difference made by that covenant betwixt perſon and perſon, ſtate and ſtate.

If this be not enough to evince, that the covenant of circumciſion is a *covenant of grace*, I promiſe you many more arguments to prove it, as ſoon as I ſhall find theſe refuted, and your contrary aſſertion well diſcharged from the groſs abſurdities with which it is clogged and loaded. You ſee how genuine, natural, and congruous to ſcripture the notion of it as a covenant of grace is, and all the world may ſee how harſh, alien, and repugnant to ſcripture your notion of circumciſion, as a *covenant of works*, is. You ſee into what bogs you are again driven in defence of your opinion: *Exemp. gra.*

That circumciſion is a part of the *ceremonial law*, which was dedicated with blood, and therefore could be no part of the *moral law* or *ten commandments*, which was (ſay you) the *covenant of works*; and yet that it is of the ſame nature, and that it is clear it is no other than a *covenant of works*: do not you there diſtinguiſh and confound all again, blame and check Mr. Sedgwick without cauſe, and commit a greater abſurdity preſently than you charged him with? Do not you queſtion whether that *covenant* was *typically* ſealed by Chriſt's blood? Pray, ſir, conſider where-ever God commands typical blood to be applied, it relates to Chriſt's blood ſpiritually applied, or to nothing.

Are not you forced, in defence of your erroneous *theſis*, to ſay with Bellarmine, That *circumciſion* was extraordinary in its inſtitution, and applied as a ſeal to none but Abraham himſelf? It excluded even Iſaac, the type of Chriſt, and Jacob,

a prince with God. O what will not men venture upon in defence of their darling opinions!

Are you not forced, for your security from the danger of the *third argument*, to cut one of the same covenants made with Abraham just in two, and of the pure promissory part to make a *covenant of grace*; and of the other part, which you yourself call a *restipulation*, to make another quite opposite covenant? Do not you magnify the bounty and grace of God to Abraham in the first four verses, and then destroy it all, by putting him at once under a contrary covenant, and so cut off all capacity to enjoy one of those mercies?

Do not you make *circumcision*, in its own nature, without respect to the intention of the person, an obligation to the whole law, and that which frustrates the death of Christ, and yet must grant, that Paul himself took Timothy, and circumcised him, and yet thereby brought him under no such dangerous obligation to the law? In a word,

You reject all those covenants as legal, that have any conditions in them, or respect to any thing that is to be done by us, and allow Gen. xii. and Gen. xxii. to be pure *gospel covenants of grace*; and yet in the first, Abraham is bound to "walk be-"fore God and be perfect;" and in the other God saith, "For because thou hast done this thing, surely blessing I will "bless thee."

And so much for Abraham's *covenant*.

III. *Of the conditionality of the new covenant.*

Come we next to consider that opinion of yours, which led you into these other gross mistakes and absurdities, and that is this, that the *covenant of grace* is absolute; and whatever covenant is not so, but hath any condition upon our part, must needs for that reason be a *covenant of works*. See pag. 229. *It is observable* (say you) *that as the covenants mentioned* Gen. ii. Exod. xx. *&c. were all conditional, and therefore legal covenants, requiring strict and perfect obedience, as the condition propounded, in order to the enjoyment of the mercies contained in them, which are all therefore done away in Christ; so on the other hand we see, that the covenant of God made with Abraham,* Gen. xii. 2, 3. *and* Gen. xvii. 2, 3. *and* Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18. *was wholly free and absolute, and therefore purely evangelical, &c.* We will review these things anon, and see if you truly represent the matter; but in order to it, let me tell you,

First, What we mean by a gospel-condition.

Secondly, Prove that there are such in the gospel-covenant.

Thirdly, Shew you the absurdity of your opinion against it.

(1.) What we mean by a *condition* in the gospel-covenant. By a condition of the covenant, we do not mean in the strictest rigid sense of the word, such a restipulation to God from man of perfect obedience in his own person, at all times, so as the least failure therein forfeits all the mercies of the covenant; that is rather the condition of Adam's covenant of works, than of the evangelical covenant: nor do we assert any *meritorious condition*, that in the nature of an impulsive cause shall bring man into the covenant and its privileges, or continue him in when brought in. This we renounce as well as you: but our question is about such a condition as is neither in the nature of it an act perfect in every degree, nor meritorious in the least of the benefit conferred, nor yet done in our own strength. But plainly and briefly, our question is, *Whether there be not something as an act required of us in point of duty, to a blessing consequent by virtue of a promise?* Such a thing, whatever it be, hath the nature of a condition, inasmuch as it is antecedent to the benefit of the promise; and the mercy or benefit granted, is suspended until it be performed. The question is not, whether there be any intrinsical worth or value in the thing so required, to oblige the disposer to make or perform the grant or promise, but merely that it be antecedent to the enjoyment of the benefit; and that the disposer of the benefit do suspend the benefit until it be performed? Thus an act or duty of ours, which hath nothing at all of merit in it, or answerable value to the benefit it relates to, may be in a proper sense a *condition* of the said benefit. "For what is a *condition* in the true notion of it, but "* the suspension of a grant until something future be "done?" "Or, † as others to the same purpose, The adding "of words to a grant, for the future, of a suspending quality, "according to which the disposer will have the benefit he dis-"poseth to be regulated?" This properly is a *condition*, though there be nothing of equivalent value or merit in the thing required. And such your brethren, in their narrative, *pag.* 14. do acknowledge faith to be, when they assert none can be actually reconciled, justified, or adopted, till they are really implanted into Jesus Christ by faith; and so, by virtue of this their union with him, have these fundamental benefits

* *Conditio est suspensio alicujus dispositionis, tantisper dum aliquid futurum fiat.* Navarr. Enchirid. 482.

† *Est verborum adjectio in futurum suspendentium, secundum quam disponens vult dispositum regulari.*

actually conveyed unto them; which contains the proper notion of the *condition* we contend for.

And ſuch a *condition of ſalvation* we aſſert *faith* to be in the new covenant grant; that is to ſay, the grant of ſalvation by God in the goſpel-covenant is ſuſpended from all men, till they believe, and is due by promiſe, not merit, to them as ſoon as they do truly believe. The notes or ſigns of a condition given by *civilians*, or *moraliſts*, are ſuch as theſe, *If*, *if not*, *unleſs*, *but if*, *except*, *only*, and the like. When theſe are added in the promiſe of a bleſſing or benefit for the future, they make that promiſe conditional; and your *grammar* (according to which you muſt ſpeak, if you ſpeak properly and ſtrictly) will tell you, that *Si*, *ſin*, *modo*, *dum*, *dummodo*, are all conditional particles; and it is evident, that theſe conditional particles are frequently inſerted in the grants of the bleſſings and privileges of the New Teſtament. As for example; Mark ix. 23. ει δυναται πιστευσαι, "If thou canſt believe." Acts viii. 37. ει πιστευεις εξ ολης της καρδιας, "If thou believeſt with thy whole "heart, thou mayeſt," &c. Rom. x. 9. οτι εαν, "That if "thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth, and believe with thy "heart, &c. thou ſhalt be ſaved." Matth. xviii. 3. εαν μη, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye "ſhall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Mark v. 36. μονον, "Only believe." Mark xi. 26. ει δε υμεις, "But if ye "forgive not," &c. with multitudes more, which are all conditional particles inſerted in the grants of benefits.

(2.) Having ſhewn you what the nature of a *condition* is, I ſhall, I hope, make it plain to you, that *faith* is ſuch a *condition* in the goſpel-grant of our ſalvation; for we find the benefit ſuſpended till this act of faith be performed; John iii. 36. "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life; and he "that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath "of God abideth on him." And moſt plainly, Rom. x. 9. having ſhewn before what the *condition* of legal righteouſneſs was, he tells us there what the goſpel-condition of ſalvation is; "The righteouſneſs which is of faith, ſpeaketh on "this wiſe; That if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the "Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thy heart, that God raiſed "him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved." I aſk you, ſir, whether it be poſſible to put words into a frame more lively expreſſive of a *condition* than theſe are? Do but compare Mark xvi. 16. "He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; "but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned:" Do but com-

pare, I say, that scripture-phrase with the words of Jacob's *sons*, which all allow to be conditional, Gen. xliii. 4, 5. "If thou "wilt send our brother with us, we will go down; but if thou "wilt not send him, we will not go down;" and judge whether the one be not as conditional as the other: more particularly,

Argument I.

If we cannot be justified or saved till we believe, then faith is the *condition* on which those consequent benefits are suspended.

But we cannot be justified or saved till we believe; *Ergo*,

The sequel of the major is evident; for, as we said before, a condition is the suspension of a grant till something future be done. The minor is plain in scripture; Rom. iv. 24. "Now "it was not written for his sake alone, that righteousness was "imputed to him; but for our sakes also, to whom it shall be "imputed if we believe." Ου μελλει λογιζεσθαι, *Quibus futurum est ut imputetur*, to whom it shall come to pass, that it shall be imputed, if we believe; And Acts x. 43. "Whosoever be-"lieveth on him, shall receive remission of sins." John iii. 36. "He that believeth not, shall not see life, but the wrath of "God abideth on him;" with multitudes more. Now, sir, lay seriously before your eyes such scriptures as these, that promise salvation to believers, and threaten damnation to all unbelievers, as Mark xvi. 16. doth, and then give a plain and clear answer to this question; either the positive part of that text promises salvation absolutely to men, whether they believe or believe not, and consequently unbelievers shall be saved as well as believers; and the negative part threatens damnation absolutely to sinners, as sinners; and consequently all sinners shall be damned, whether they believe or believe not: or else, if you allow neither to be absolute, but that none can be saved till they believe, nor any damned when they do believe; is not that a conditional promise and threatening?

Argument II.

If God's covenant with Abraham, Gen. xii. 2, 3. and that Gen. xvii. 2, 3. were (as you say) pure gospel-covenants of grace, and yet in both some things are required as duties on Abraham's part, to make him partaker of the benefits of the promises; then the covenant of grace is not absolute, but conditional.

But so it was in both these covenants; *Ergo*,

The minor only requires proof; for which let us have recourse to the places, and see whether it be so or not.

(1.) For the first you instance in as a pure gospel-covenant made with Abraham, Gen. xii. 2, 3. I must confess, as you

diſmember the text, *p.* 229. by chuſing out the ſecond and third verſes, and leaving out the firſt, which was the trial of Abraham's obedience, in forſaking his native country, and his father's houſe; I ſay, give me but this liberty to ſeparate and disjoin one part of a covenant from the other, and it is eaſy to make any conditional covenant in the world to become abſolute: for take but the duty required, from the promiſe that is made, and that which was a conditional, preſently becomes an abſolute grant. Suppoſe, ſir, that Abraham had refuſed to leave his dear native country, and deareſt relations, as many do; think you that the promiſed mercies had been his? I muſt plainly tell you, you aſſume a ſtrange liberty in this matter, and make a great deal bolder with the ſcriptures than you ought: and the very ſame uſage the other ſcriptures hath.

(2.) For when you cite your *ſecond covenant* with Abraham, you only cite Gen. xvii. 2, 3. and then call it an *abſolute goſpel-covenant*; when indeed you made it ſo, by leaving out the firſt verſe, which contains the condition or duty required on Abraham's part: for thus run the three firſt verſes; "And when "Abraham was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to "Abraham, and ſaid unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk "thou before me, and be thou perfect, and I will make my co"venant between me and thee," *&c.* Here an upright converſation before God is required of him, at God's entrance into this covenant with him; but that is, and muſt be omitted, and cut off, to make the covenant look abſolute. I am really grieved to ſee the ſcriptures thus dealt with to ſerve a deſign!

Argument III.

If all the promiſes of the goſpel be abſolute and unconditional, requiring no reſtipulation from man, then they cannot properly and truly belong to the new covenant.

But they do properly and truly belong to the *new covenant*; therefore they are not all abſolute and unconditional.

The ſequel of the major is only liable to doubt or denial, namely, That the abſoluteneſs of all the promiſes of the New Teſtament cuts off their relation to a covenant; but that it doth ſo, no man can deny, that underſtands the difference between a covenant and an abſolute promiſe. A covenant is a mutual compact or agreement betwixt parties, in which they bind each other to the performance of what they reſpectively promiſe; ſo that there can be no other proper covenant where there is not a reſtipulation or re-obligation of one part, as well as a promiſe on the other: but an abſolute promiſe binds only one party, and leaves the other wholly free and unobliged to

any thing, in order to the enjoyment of the good promiſed. So then, if all the New Teſtament promiſes be unconditional and abſolute, they are not part of a covenant, nor muſt that word be applied to them; they are abſolute promiſes, binding no man to whom they are made to any duty, in order to the enjoyment of the mercies promiſed: But thoſe perſons that are under theſe abſolute promiſes, muſt and ſhall enjoy the mercies of pardon and ſalvation, whether they repent or repent not, believe or believe not, obey or obey not. Now, to what licentiouſneſs this doctrine leads men, is obvious to every eye. Yet this abſoluteneſs of the *covenant* (as you improperly call it) is by you aſſerted, *p.* 229, 230. There is (ſay you) no condition at all, it is wholly free and abſolute, as the *covenant* with Abraham, Gen. xii. 2, 3. Gen. xvii. 2, 3. Thank you, ſir, for making them ſo; for by cutting off the firſt verſes, where the duty required on Abraham's part is contained, you make them what God never intended them to be. And the ſame foul play is in Deut. xxx. where you ſeparate the plain condition contained in ver. 1, 2. from the promiſe, ver. 6. Or if the condition, ver. 1, 2. be not plain enough, but you will make it part of the promiſe, I hope that after, in ver. 10. is too plain to be denied. As to the other texts, more anon; mean time ſee how you deſtroy the nature of a *covenant*.

Object. But ſay you, *pag.* 233. To impoſe new conditions, though never ſo mild, is a new *covenant of works* with ſome mercy, but not a *covenant of grace*, properly ſo called.

Sol. It is true, if thoſe works or acts of ours, which God requires, be underſtood of meritorious works in our own ſtrength and power to perform, it deſtroys the free grace of the *covenant*; but this we utterly reject, and ſpeak only of faith wrought in us by the Spirit of God, which receives all from God, and gives the entire glory to God; Eph. ii. 5, 8.

Object. But you will ſay, If faith be the *condition*, and that faith be not of ourſelves, then both the *promiſe* and the *condition* are on God's part (if you will call faith a *condition*) and ſo ſtill on our part the *covenant* is abſolute.

Sol. This is a miſtake, and the miſtake in this leads you into all the reſt; though faith (which we call the condition on our part) be the gift of God, and the power of believing be derived from God, yet the act of believing is properly our act, though the power by which we believe be of God; elſe it would follow, when we act any grace, as faith, repentance, or obedience, that God believes, repents, and obeys in us, and it is we, but God that doth all theſe. This, I hope, you will

not dare to aſſert; they are truly our works, though wrought in God's ſtrength? Iſa. xxvi. 12. "Lord, thou haſt wrought "all our works in us;" *i. e.* though they be our works, yet they are wrought in us by thy grace or ſtrength.

As for Dr. Owen, it is plain from the place you cite in the doctrine of juſtification, *pag.* 156. he only excludes conditions, as we do, in reſpect of the dignity of the act, as is more plain in his treatiſe of redemption, *pag.* 103, 104. in which he allows conditions in both the *covenants*, and makes this the difference, That the Old required them, but the New effects them in all the foederates.

I know no orthodox divine in the world, that preſumes to thruſt in any work of man's into the *covenant of grace*, as a *condition*, which, in the Arminian ſenſe, he may or may not perform, according to the power and pleaſure of his own free will, without the preventing or determining grace of God; which preventing grace is contained in thoſe promiſes, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. *&c.* Nor yet that there is any meritorious worth, either of *condignity* or *congruity* in the Popiſh ſenſe, in the very juſtifying act of faith, for the which God juſtifies and ſave us. But we ſay, That tho' God, in the way of preventing grace, works faith in us, and when it is ſo wrought, we need his aſſiſting grace to act it, yet neither his aſſiſting nor preventing grace makes the act of faith no more to be *our* act; it is we that believe ſtill tho' in God's ſtrength, and that upon our believing, or not believing, we have or have not the benefits of God's promiſes; which is the very proper notion of a *condition*.

Argument IV.

If all the promiſes of the new covenant be abſolute and unconditional, having no reſpect nor relation to any grace wrought in us, nor duty done by us, then the trial of our intereſt in Chriſt, by *marks* and *ſigns* of grace, is not our duty, nor can we take comfort in ſanctification, as an evidence of our juſtification.

But it is a Chriſtan's duty to try his intereſt in Chriſt by *marks* and *ſigns*; and he may take comfort in ſanctification, as an evidence of juſtification; *Ergo*,

The ſequel of the *major* is undeniably clear; for that can never be a ſign or evidence of an intereſt in Chriſt, which that intereſt may be without; yea, and as * Dr. Criſpe aſſerts, according to his Antinomian principles, 'Chriſt is ours (faith

* Dr. Criſpe, 2d. Vol. of Chriſt exalted, Serm. 14.

' he) before we have gracious qualifications; every true mark ' and ſign muſt be inſeparable from that it ſignifies.' Now, if the works of the Spirit in us be not ſo, but an intereſt in Chriſt may be where theſe are not, then they are no proper marks or ſigns; and if they are not, it cannot be our duty to make uſe of them as ſuch, and conſequently if we ſhould, they can yield us no comfort.

The *minor* is plain in ſcripture; 1 John ii. 3. "Hereby we "do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." The meaning is, we perceive and diſcern ourſelves to be ſincere believers, and conſequently that Chriſt is our propitiation, when obedience to his commands is become habitual and eaſy to us; So 1 John iii. 19. "Hereby we know that we are of "the truth, and ſhall aſſure our hearts before him;" *i. e.* by our ſincere cordial love to Chriſt and his members, as ver. 18. this ſhall demonſtrate to us, that we are the children of truth; and again, 1 John iii. 14. "We know that we are paſſed from "death to life; becauſe we love the brethren:" With multitudes more to the ſame purpoſe, which plainly teach Chriſtians to fetch the evidences of their juſtification out of their ſanctification, and to prove their intereſt in Chriſt, by the works of his Spirit found in their own hearts.

And this is not only a Chriſtian's liberty, but his commanded duty to bring his intereſt in Chriſt to this touchſtone, and teſt; 2 Cor. xiii. 5. "Examine yourſelves, prove yourſelves," *&c.* 2 Pet. i. 10. "Give all diligence to make your calling "and election ſure;" *i. e.* your election by your calling. No man can make his election ſure *a priori*, nor can any make it ſurer than it is *in ſe*; therefore it is only capable of being made ſure to us *a poſteriori*; arguing from the work of ſanctification in us, to God's eternal choice of us.

And as the ſaints in all ages have taken this courſe, ſo they have taken great and lawful comfort in the uſe of theſe marks and ſigns of grace; 2 Kings xx. 3. 2 Cor. i. 12.

I am ſenſible how vehemently the Antinomian party, Dr. Criſpe, Mr. Eyre, and ſome others, do oppugn this truth, repreſenting it as legal and impracticable (for they are for the abſolute and unconditional nature of the *new covenant*, as well as you); but by your eſpouſing their principle, you have even run Anabaptiſm into Antinomianiſm; and muſt, by this principle of yours, renounce all marks and trials of an intereſt in Chriſt, by any work of the Spirit wrought in us. You muſt only ſtick to the immediate ſealings of the Spirit; which, if ſuch a thing be at all, it is but rare and extraordinary.

I will not deny but there may be an immediate testimony of the Spirit; but sure I am his mediate testimony by his graces in us, is his usual way of sealing believers. We do not affirm any of these his works to be meritorious causes of our justification; or that, considered abstractly from the Spirit, they can of themselves seal, or evidence our interest in Christ: Neither do we affirm, that any of them are complete and perfect works; but this we say, that they being true and sincere, though imperfect graces, they are our usual and standing evidences, to made out our interest in Christ by. And I hope you, and the whole Antinomian *party*, will find it hard, yea, and impossible, to remove the saints from that comfortable and scriptural way of examining their interest in Christ, by the graces of his Spirit in them; as the saints, who are gone to heaven before them, have done in all generations.

Argument V.

If the *covenant of grace* be altogether absolute and unconditional, requiring nothing to be done on our part, to entitle us to its benefits; then it cannot be man's duty in entring covenant with God, to deliberate the terms, count the cost, or give his consent by word or writing, explicitly to the terms of this covenant.

But it is man's duty in entring covenant with God, to deliberate the terms, and count the cost; Luke xiv. 26, to 34. and explicitly to give his consent thereunto, either by word or writing: *Ergo*,

The sequel of the *major* is self-evident: For where there are no terms or conditions required on our part, there can be none to deliberate, or give our consent to; and so a man may be in a covenant without his own consent.

The *minor* is undeniable in the text cited: If you say, These are *duties*, but not *conditions*: I reply, they are such *duties*, without the performance of which we can have no benefit by Christ and the new covenant, Luke xiv. 33. And such *duties* have the true suspending nature of *conditions* in them. If you say they are only subsequent duties, but not antecedent or concomitant acts, the 28th verse directly opposes you: *Let him first sit down and count the cost*. And for those overt acts, whereby we explicitly declare our consent to the terms of the *covenant*, at our first entering into the bond of it, I hope you will not say, that it is a *legal covenant* too; Isa. xliv. 3, 4. "I will pour "water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry "ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my bles-

" ſing upon thine off-ſpring; and they ſhall ſpring up as a-
" mong the graſs, as willows by the water-courſes: One ſhall
" ſay, I am the Lord's, and another ſhall call himſelf by the
" name of Jacob; and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand
" unto the Lord," *&c.* A plain alluſion to ſoldiers, when they liſt themſelves under a captain, or general.

What remains now to reply to theſe arguments, but either that the places by me cited and argued upon, do not intend the *new covenant*, under which we are; or that this *new covenant* hath its *conditions*, and is not altogether abſolute, as you have aſſerted it to be.

And thus, ſir, you are fairly beaten off (if I miſtake not) from the new ground you had choſen and marked out to raiſe your battery upon, to demoliſh that ſtrong fort which ſecures the right of believers infants to *baptiſm*; and you muſt return again to the old anſwers of Mr. Tombes, and others, to our ſolid and ſubſtantial argument from Abraham's covenant, Gen. xvii. which have been baffled over and over by Baxter, Blake, Sydenham, and many other ſtout champions for *infants baptiſm*.

All that I am further concerned about, is to examine ſo many of theſe ſcriptures as you have ſpoken to, which are by us produced in defence of thoſe four grounds or principles mentioned in the beginning of this diſcourſe, whereon we eſtabliſh the right of *infants baptiſm*; and to vindicate thoſe ſcriptures from your ſtrained and injurious interpretations of them: Which being done, they will each of them ſtand in thoſe eminent places of ſervice, where they have been ſo long uſeful to the cauſe we defend.

As for your pretended ſolutions of the incomparable Mr. Baxter's, and the learned and accurate Dr. Burthogg's arguments, I admire at your confidence therein; and let me tell you, without breach of charity, it is an high piece of confidence in you, to throw the gantlet, and bid defiance to two ſuch worthies yet alive, and eaſily able to detect your folly, in the weakneſs and impertinency of your anſwers. Alas! my friend, you little know what it is to have ſuch weak and inartificial diſcourſes as yours brought under the ſtrict *examen* of ſuch acute and judicious eyes. But,

——— *Sic dama leonem*
Inſequitur, audetque viro concurrere virgo.

Nor will I preſume to anticipate either of their anſwers to your diſcourſe (if they ſhall think it worthy of an anſwer);

but rather briefly reflect upon what you return to the arguments of those eminent divines that are gone to glory in the faith of that truth you oppose, and are not capable of defending their solid and regular interpretations of scriptures, against the notions you force upon them, contrary both to the grammar and scope of several of them.

And here, sir, in the beginning, let me mind you what a learned and judicious person saith, about all interpretations of scriptures: 'Four things (*saith he*) commend an interpretation, and establish it as a king upon the throne, against whom 'there is no rising up.'

First, If the latter and grammar of the text fairly bear it.

Secondly, If the scope and argument of the place will close directly with it.

Thirdly, If the interpretation set up against it, cannot stand before both, or either of the former.

Fourthly, If the judgment of learned, wise, and impartial men be found generally agreeable to it.

According to these rules (whereat you can have no just exception) I shall briefly, yet I hope clearly and sufficiently, answer some of the replies you make to the arguments of those deceased worthies: And,

(1.) In *pag.* 1. you produce Mr. William Allen's argument, *ad hominem*, against your practice: 'He tells you, your own 'principle condemns you; for you reject the baptizing of in-'fants, because there is no example in the New Testament of 'it; and yet baptize persons at age, whose parents were Chri-'stians; which is as much without a gospel precedent, or ex-'ample, as the former. *The sum of your reply is*, That tho' 'it should be granted, that there is no express example for 'the baptizing such in scripture, yet there are examples e-'nough concerning the baptism of believers.'

Reply. Here you grant all that Mr. Allen objects; *viz.* 'That you are altogether without example or precedent for 'your practice: And object to him and us, what he nor we 'ever scrupled or denied; *viz.* The baptizing of some adult per-'sons, upon the personal profession of their faith.' I have done it myself, and, in like circumstances, am ready to do it again. Once you clearly yield it, that you have no precedent nor example for your practice in the gospel: That is all that he seeks, and what he seeks, you plainly grant. As to the precept and examples of baptizing adult believers, whose parents were unbelievers, and themselves never baptized in infancy, that is

not the point you are now to speak to; nor have we any controversy about it. Certainly you are none of the fittest persons in the world to clamour so loudly against us, for want of express precedents for *infants baptism*, whilst yourself confesses, you want even one precedent in the New Testament to legitimate your own practice; and in the mean time are found in the sinful neglect of a sweet and heavenly gospel-ordinance, *viz.* the singing of *psalms*, for which you have both precept and precedent in the gospel, Col. iii. 16. James v. 13. 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

(2.) It is objected against you, *page* 2. 'That if the commission, Matth. xxviii. excludes none from baptism, but such as are to be excluded by the order therein to be observed; and if baptizing and teaching are to precede, or follow one the other, as there named by Christ, then these two conclusions will follow. (1.) That infants are not there excluded from baptism. (2.) That a person may be baptized, before he be taught; for there we have, *First*, Μαθητευσατε παντα τα εθνη, disciple all nations; make them disciples, or Christians. *Secondly*, We have βαπτιζοντες και διδασκοντες; which literally to translate, is baptizing and teaching. Now then discipling being a general word, that contains in it the two others that follow, *viz.* Baptizing and teaching; and being the *imperative mood*, whereas the other two are *participles*; it is manifest, that the whole command, or commission, is given in that, and the mode of execution in these. And if the mode of executing that general commission be expressed in these, where baptizing is first, and teaching comes after; what is become of the order of the *Antipoedobaptists* that have been so long talked of?'

The sum of your answer is, 'That if baptizing be first, and teaching comes after; then it will follow, that the apostles understood not their commission aright; for they first preached, and then baptized them that by their preaching believed, Acts viii. Acts x. Acts ii. with many other places you heap up to the same purpose. And therefore infants must be excluded by that commission, because uncapable of being taught. And therefore let us criticize as we please upon *imperative moods* and *participles*, the case is clear, teaching must go before baptizing.'

Reply. It had been more modest to suspect that you understood not the text aright, than that the apostles understood not their commission aright. The order of the words (as this well fortified objection declares, and you cannot deny)

puts *teaching* after *baptizing*. And though we should allow you, that they discipled adult persons by *teaching*, and taught others baptized in infancy, after their baptizing them; in both they followed their order and commission, in discipling the parents by preaching, and teaching their children baptized, by virtue of the promise to them, after their baptism. For he declares, Acts ii. "the promise is to them, and to their chil-"dren;" which gives a right to both unto baptism: And so *teaching*, according to the order of this *commission*, may be an antecedent duty to the parent, and a subsequent duty to him and his baptized children. For if Μαθητευσατε includes teaching before baptizing, why should not Διδασκοντες, which is put after baptizing, respect the subsequent duty of teaching both the one and other?

(3.) Mr. Allen's next argument, mentioned by you, *pag.* 5. is taken from Matth. xix. 14. "Suffer little children to come "unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of "heaven." Whence he argues against your objection, of the incapacity of *infants* for *baptism*; that if they are capable of interest, or membership in the kingdom of heaven, or church, they are equally capable of the sign or cognizance, which is *baptism*.

To this you reply three things: (1.) 'That it remains to 'be proved, that these little children were infants, and not 'grown boys or girls, capable of making an actual profession 'of their faith in Christ. (2.) It is doubtful, whether they 'were for the present in the kingdom of God, or were only 'elected, and so in time should be of his kingdom. And (3.) 'whatever they were, they were brought unto Christ, who 'himself baptized not; not to his disciples, who did baptize.'

Reply. Your first exception is vain and groundless: That they were very young, and little ones appears not only by Christ's taking them in his arms, but from the very notation of the word Παιδια, a diminutive word, signifying a little child, or infant. So John was called, when new-born, Luke i. 76. And Christ, when he lay in the manger; and Moses, when among the flags. And if this be not enough, St. Luke gives them another name, Luke xvii. 15. Τα βρεφη, infants; a word given to a child in the womb, Luke i. 41. And for what you object out of Piscator, that the same word is used of Timothy, who knew the scriptures from a child; it is an evident mistake or shift: For the word is, απο βρεφους; he knew them, not being an *infant*, but from his *childhood*, or *infancy*; that is, when he had passed his *infant-state*, in which state these were

that were brought unto Chriſt. And, (2.) Whereas you queſtion their preſent right in the kingdom of God, or whether it were not future, by virtue of their election? The text will not allow your intrepretation, Των γαρ τοιουτων εστιν, *Of ſuch is:* not, εσται, *ſhall be, the kingdom of God.* Their preſent church-memberſhip, aſſerted by Chriſt, is alſo a known rule, to regulate for the future the diſciples carriage towards them; which was too ſevere, harſh, and therefore highly diſpleaſing to Chriſt: But by telling them they were members of the church, or kingdom of heaven, (they being very probably the *infants* of believing parents, as their bringing them unto Chriſt with ſuch affection, through the frowns and repulſes of the diſciples, ſhews) he gives them a known and plain rule, how to diſtinguiſh *infants*, and regulate their carriage towards them; which God's election can never be, that being an unrevealed ſecret. And, (3.) Whereas you ſay Chriſt did not baptize them: I reply, We never urged this ſcripture, to prove he did ſo; but only to prove their *church-memberſhip*; which, methinks, Chriſt aſſerts as plainly as words can affert it, whence he ſaith, *Of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven.* And though you uſe to quibble at the word τοιουτων, *of ſuch*, as though it reſpected not the preſent infants, but grown perſons, reſembling them in humble and innocent qualities; Mr. Sydenham hath ſufficiently baffled that interpretation, by ſhewing its inconſiſtence with the ſcope and argument of that place, and how ridiculous this ſenſe would be, when reduced to a formal argument.

(4.) The fourth argument you pretend to anſwer, *pag.* 8. is drawn from 1 Cor. vii. 14. "Elſe were your children unclean; "but now are they holy." To this you anſwer two things: (1.) That the holineſs here ſpoken of, is not a fœderal, but a matrimonial holineſs, namely, *legitimacy*; and is as much as to ſay, Your children are no baſtards, ſeeing one of you is a *believer*.

Reply. If this be the true and genuine ſenſe of this text, then all the children in the world, not immediately deſcended from one, or both believing parents, muſt of neceſſity be all baſtards; their parents, how ſolemnly ſoever married, muſt live in uncleanneſs: And what mad work (think you) will this aſſertion make in the world? And how many millions of perſons will it nearly touch, both in point of honour and inheritance?

(2.) You ſay, though the holineſs here ſpoken of, ſhould be

allowed to be a fœderal, or covenant holineſs; yet for want of an expreſs inſtitution, it will not warrant our practice.

Reply. The holineſs of the *children* being granted to be a covenant holineſs, none can deny them to be within the *covenant*: how elſe come they to be holy by *covenant?* And if within the *covenant*, who can deny them the initiating ſign, which is *baptiſm?* Or how ſhall they (ordinarily) be viſibly admitted into the viſible church without it? The connection betwixt their fœderal holineſs, and right to baptiſm, will appear plain enough from Acts ii. 38. which you come next to ſpeak to.

(5.) You attempt to anſwer Mr. Allen's argument from Acts ii. 38. "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jeſus "Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift "of the holy Ghoſt. For the promiſe is unto you, and to your "children, and unto all that are afar off, even as many as the "Lord our God ſhall call."

On this text, you know, we lay a very great ſtreſs for the proof of *infants baptiſm*; and it deſerves a remark, that you wholly ſuppreſs our *arguments* drawn from that text, but however return an *anſwer* to them all, ſuch as it is. You firſt tell us, 'The promiſe here ſpoken of, is not a promiſe of any external privileges, but the promiſe of the goſpel, or the grace of God in Chriſt Jeſus.'

Secondly, 'That the promiſe was not to their children, as believers ſeed, nor to them, or any other uncalled by the Lord; but only a promiſe of remiſſion of ſins, and receiving the holy Ghoſt, upon their actual repentance; which infants cannot perform, and therefore cannot here be intended.' This is the true and whole ſenſe of your *anſwer*.

Reply. Now, becauſe you have wholly omitted our *argument* from this text (for which doubtleſs there was ſome reaſon) I think myſelf obliged to let the world know, how we expound it, and what we duly infer from that expoſition of it; and then let the reader judge, whether by the fore-mentioned rules of a juſt interpretation, you or we are in the right.

(1.) We obſerve this famous text to contain the firſt *argument* uſed by the apoſtle, after Chriſt's aſcenſion, to perſuade the Jews to embrace *Chriſtianity*, by repenting, and ſubmitting themſelves to *baptiſm*, the initiating ſign of it; and therefore here we juſtly expect much light about this controverted point: Nor doth the apoſtle, in this text, deceive our expectation.

(2.) We take it for granted, that the direct and proper

ſcope of this place, is to perſuade the Jews (to whom St. Peter preached) to repent, and be baptized. This you allow; when you ſay, *p.* 10. 'He uſes it as a motive, why they and 'theirs ſhould actually repent, and be baptized.' In theſe two then there is no controverſy.

(3.) We take it for certain, that the promiſe here referred to by Peter, is that gracious promiſe, Gen. xvii. 7. "I will be "a God to thee, and to thy ſeed after thee." The adjoining of their *children* to them, ſaith Calvin, (and with him runs the general current of *expoſitors*) depends on the words of that promiſe, Gen xvii. 6. If you be not ſatisfied with this, but rather will refer it to Joel ii. 28. you are then obliged to anſwer Mr. Sydenham's arguments *a fortiori*, from that reference. But you make no exception at all to this accommodation of it: And then the ſenſe muſt be this; the promiſe ſhall run as before, "to you and to your children."

(4.) We ſay, that except it had had relation to the *covenant* with Abraham, there had been no occaſion, or reaſon at all, here to have mentioned *children* as well as *parents*: "The "promiſe is to you, and to your children." It had been enough, if he had only intended the believing parents, excluſive of their infant-ſeed, to have ſaid, The promiſe is made to "as many as "the Lord our God ſhall call." What reaſon, or occaſion, was there to bring in their *children* at all?

(5.) We find here the *children* both of believing Jews and Gentiles, mentioned in the promiſe, accompanying the precept of *baptiſm*; and the precept to them built on the promiſe, as that which gave them their title to *baptiſm*; ὑμῖν γάρ ἐστιν ἡ ἐπαγγελία, "For the promiſe is to you, and to your children." In the ſame line that he mentions baptiſm, he alſo mentions the promiſe upon which their right is founded; and in the ſame breath with which he mentions their children, he alſo mentions the promiſe: which he would never have done, had his deſign been to have excluded their children from both, or either of them; eſpecially ſeeing their *children* had been ſo long in the poſſeſſion of both. Theſe things are obvious, natural, and every way agreeable, both to the grammar and ſcope of the text. Whence we argue:

Arg. If the *promiſe* be the ſame to *believers* under the goſpel, that ever it was to Abraham and his natural ſeed; then the *children* of *believers*, by virtue thereof, have as good a title to *baptiſm*, as Abraham's *children* had to *circumciſion*:

But the *promiſe* is the ſame: *Ergo*, &c.

Next let us conſider your *anſwers*:

(1.) You say, *The promise, here spoken of, is not a promise of any external privilege, but the promise of the gospel.*

Reply. Your distinction is vain and groundless; for it opposeth promises, that contain external privileges, to gospel promises, contrary to 1 Tim. iv. 8. "Godliness hath the promise "of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." *Secondly*, Circumcision then, and baptism now, which have both their foundation in that promise, contain privileges in them of both sorts. This no man can deny, but he that thinks it no privilege to be admitted into the visible church, by the external initiating sign, and to be thereby distinguished from the Pagan world. You have no warrant, therefore, to divide those things which God hath united.

(2.) You say, *The promise was not to them as believers seed, nor to any uncalled by the Lord.*

Reply. Your meaning is, that these words [*as many as the Lord shall call,*] are a limitation of the promise to them only, whether parents or children, that are actually called. Let this your interpretation be compared with, and examined by the scope of the text, which you confessed before to be a motive to persuade them and theirs to repentance and baptism, and see if it can stand before it, as ours doth. For if this be the meaning, then the apostle's argument must run thus: 'I exhort you, 'convinced Jews, to repentance and Christian baptism: for 'whereas you, and your children, have hitherto been an holy 'seed, and the promise formerly was to them as well as you; 'but now the case is altered: if you yourselves repent, and be 'baptized, you shall have the benefit of the promise; but as 'for your children, they shall be in the self-same case, and 'state, with the children of Pagans and infidels. Indeed, if 'any of your children shall hereafter *believe*, they shall have 'benefit by the promise, but no more than the children of Pa'gans and infidels, which upon repentance shall be equal with 'them. "Repent ye therefore, and be baptized; for the pro'mise is unto you, and to your children." This, and no other, must the apostle's motive be, according to your interpretation and limitation of his words.

We make the motive or argument to run thus: 'God hath 'now remembered his *covenant* to Abraham, in sending that 'blessed seed, in whom he promised to be the God of him, and 'his seed; yea, and of all believing Gentiles, as well as Jews 'and their children: do not you therefore, by your unbelief, 'deprive both yourselves, and your dear children, of the mer-

'cies and privileges of ſo great a promiſe? "Repent, there-
'"fore, and be baptized; for the promiſe is unto you, and
'"to your children," *&c.* Let the impartial reader judge both, and the acknowledged ſcope of the place determine the matter. And as it cannot ſtand with the ſcope of the place, ſo neither (as Mr. Sydenham * hath plainly evinced) with the grammar of the text, nor rules of logic, by which, according to your *expoſition*, the word [*children*] muſt be redundant and ſuperfluous, as being neither comprehended under Jews or Gentiles, thoſe that are near, or far off: into which two claſſes, or ranks, the text diſtributes the whole world; but muſt ſtand out of the text, as a party, by themſelves, though expreſsly mentioned in it, as thoſe to whom the *promiſe* belongs. But enough of this.

(6.) Having vindicated Acts ii. 38, 39. which confirms our fourth aſſertion, *viz.* the identity of the *promiſe* the Jews were, and we are under; we proceed next to vindicate Col. ii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, whereby we prove the ſucceſſion of *baptiſm* to *circumciſion*, and vindicate it from that foreign ſenſe you force upon it, to the great injury of the text, as well as of our *infants*, whom you exclude from any concernment therein.

Without any repreſentation at all of the grounds on which we proceed, to prove the ſucceſſion of this ordinance to that, you (as raſhly as confidently) call it a groundleſs inference; which, whether it be or no, let the impartial judge, when they ſhall ſee the grounds on which we build that aſſertion.

(1.) It is out of controverſy, that the ſcope of this place is to take off the Coloſſians from *circumciſion*, and other Jewiſh rites and ceremonies, which the falſe teachers at that time earneſtly endeavoured to reduce them to; as appears, ver. 4. to be his plain deſign: "And this I ſay, leſt any man ſhould beguile
"you with enticing words." And he ſaith it with great concernment of mind, as appears ver. 1.

(2.) It is as plain, that the argument by which he eſtabliſhes them in the truth of the goſpel, and ſecures them againſt the danger of returning to thoſe Jewiſh rites, eſpecially circumciſion, is drawn from their completeneſs in Chriſt without it; ver. 9, and 10. And that whatſoever they had under circumciſion, they now enjoy in as complete and full a meaſure and manner, as ever Abraham and his ſeed did. "And ye are complete
"in him," *(i. e.)* in Chriſt.

(3.) To evince this, he inſtanceth in the very caſe then under

* Infant Baptiſm, p. 44, 45.

debate, *viz.* circumciſion, ver. 11, 12. And firſt diſtinguiſhing of a twofold circumciſion, one made with, and the other without hands, which he calls the *circumciſion of Chriſt*: he tells them, as to both of theſe, (namely, inward circumciſion of the heart, and the external ſign thereof too) both are fully anſwered in baptiſm; "In whom alſo ye are circumciſed with the "circumciſion made without hands; in putting off the body "of the ſins of the fleſh, by the circumciſion of Chriſt, bu-"ried with him in baptiſm," ver. 11, 12. That is, look, as before inward circumciſion of the heart was ſignified by outward circumciſion of the fleſh, as the proper, direct, and appointed ſign of it; ſo now, the ſame inward circumciſion, or regeneration of the ſoul, is as really and fully ſignified to you, by the new goſpel ſign of it, which is baptiſm: and therefore you are as complete, in reſpect both of outward and inward privileges now, as ever Abraham and his ſeed were. Do but convert the propoſition, and ſuppoſe the apoſtle's deſign had been to take them off from baptiſm, and bring them back to circumciſion; and in order to it had ſaid, "In whom ye are alſo baptized with the "baptiſm of Chriſt, being circumciſed with him:" would not the ſubſtitution of circumciſion in the place of baptiſm have been clear? And why is not this as clear as that would have been?

(4.) We further ſay, That except he had intended in theſe words to have placed baptiſm as an external ordinance, in place and ſtead of outward circumciſion, he could never have pitched upon a worſe inſtance than that of circumciſion, which was ſo much valued by them: yea, from the very inſtance he brings, he had put a ſtrong objection into their mouths, againſt his aſſertion, ver. 10. That we are every way as complete without it, as the Jews were with it; for then their children enjoyed an ordinance of great value, which ours are deprived of, having none under the goſpel in lieu of it. Hence we argue:

Argument. If the ordinance of baptiſm now be appointed to anſwer the ſame ends that the circumciſion did to the Jews, and to make us every way as complete in privileges as circumciſion did them, then it comes in the place and room of it; and our *children* have the ſame right to this, as theirs had to that.

But the antecedent is plain, from the ſcope and argument of the apoſtle in this text and context: *Ergo*, So is the conſequent.

The ſum of your anſwer is, (1.) 'That circumciſion in the 'fleſh, is neither expreſſed nor meant here, but that of Chriſt

'in his own person. (2.) That if baptism had been intended 'to have come in the place of circumcision; then it would follow, that females must be excluded from baptism.'

Reply. Your first *answer* is manifestly false: for if the apostle distinguishes of a twofold circumcision, one made with hands, the other made without hands; then it is manifest, he means the *circumcision in the flesh*, which is now abolished, and all its ends and uses answered in *gospel baptism*. And whereas you say, The circumcision here spoken of, is no other but the circumcision of Christ in his own person; I would gladly know how the Colossians are said to be circumcised in Christ's personal *circumcision* only? And whether the *baptism* here spoken of, wherewith they are said to be *buried with him*, be not meant of Christ's personal *baptism* too; and, consequently, there is no need of the outward *ordinance* to pass upon them, or us; but especially, it is worth while for you to explain the reason why he calls the Colossians circumcision, a *circumcision of Christ made without hands*, if he only intends Christ's personal *circumcision*; when we all know, that Christ's personal *circumcision* was a *circumcision made with hands*; and could not possibly be such a *circumcision* as theirs was, consisting in the *putting off* the body of the sins of the flesh, or mortification of their corruptions. Christ had no sin by propagation, to put off or mortify in his own person.

(2.) Your second *answer* is no less absurd; *That*, if baptism, *according to our argument, succeeds in the place of circumcision, then females must be excluded from baptism.* You had as good have said, that the enlargement of the privilege under the gospel, is no good medium to prove we are as complete now under *baptism* as they were under *circumcision*. Cannot *baptism* stand in the place of *circumcision*, because it answers all its ends with an advantage? This, to me, is a very strange answer; however, it must stand in the place of a better, rather than *baptism* shall stand in the place of *circumcision*.

Object. But if *baptism* succeed in the room of *circumcision*, and there be such an analogy betwixt them, as you pretend; then it will follow, that you are obliged to *baptize* your children on the eighth day, as they *circumcised* theirs.

Sol. The objection is frivolous and vain: no man, that I know, doubts, but the *Lord's-supper* succeeds in the room and place of the *passover*. Christ was the substance of that, as well as this; and that was abrogated by his institution of this, the very same night: as soon as he and his disciples had celebrated the one, the other was instituted, and immediately suc-

ceeded it. And yet Christians are not obliged to the same month, day, or hour, for the celebration of the Lord's supper: the analogy is betwixt the substantial parts of both; amongst which, the spiritual mystery, principal ends, and proper subjects, are of principal consideration; not the minuter circumstances of time and place. In the *passover* and the *Lord's supper*, there is a correspondence betwixt the proper subjects of both. No uncircumcised person, or stranger to the *covenant*, might eat of that, Exod. xii. 43, 48. No unbelieving person, uncircumcised in heart, hath a right to this, 1 Cor. xi. 27, 28. So in the other; the infants of God's covenanted people were the proper subjects of *circumcision* then, and so they are (say we) of *baptism* now; for the same promise is still to believers and their children, Acts ii. 38, 39. Here lies the analogy, and not in the variable circumstances of time.

Whereas you say, pag. 12. *Baptism* cannot succeed *circumcision*, because it leaves no character or mark upon the body, as that did. This very objection of yours is borrowed in express words from Socinus, that enemy of Christ, in *disp. de bapt.* pag. 113, and fully answered by *Maccovius*, *loc. com.* pag. 830, 831.

Object. But it will be further said, That according to our opinion, there can be no analogy, or correspondency, betwixt the very subjects of both ordinances: for *infants*, at eight days old, were the proper subjects of *circumcision*; but the subjects of *baptism* were adult believers, from the time of its first institution: and so the analogy fails in the very subjects.

Sol. This objection is grounded upon a great mistake: it is your opinion, not ours, that destroys it; for with us it lies fairly in these three respects of it. (1.) We find, that at the first institution of *circumcision*, Abraham, the father, at ninety years old, and all the men of his house, were first *circumcised*, Gen. xvii. 25, 26, 27. Answerably, at the first institution of *baptism*, parents, masters of families, *&c.* being adult believers, were first baptized. (2.) After the *circumcision* of Abraham, and the men of his house, their *infant-seed* were also *circumcised*, the promise belonging to them, as well as their parents. Answerably, under the *gospel*, the whole families of *believers* were baptized; and the promise runs to their *infants* under the *gospel*, as it did before, Acts ii. 39. (3.) As in the days of *circumcision*, if any stranger that had not been *circumcised* in his *infancy*, should afterward become a proselyte, and join himself to the Lord, he was to be *circumcised*, of whatever age he was: so now, if any *infidel* shall be converted, he is to be *baptized*,

upon his perſonal profeſſion of faith: and ſo much for the analogy. As for your correſpondency of *identity*, I cannot underſtand it.

I meet with little more in your firſt part, wherein I have any concernment; only there I find four arguments, in mood and figure, againſt the innovation of *ſymbolical rites*, by human authority, into the worſhip of God; which is certainly the beſt *page* in your book: and of them I have nothing to ſay, but that they are good ware; and I very well know the mark and number of that *parcel* of *goods*, and to whom they properly belong.

But yet before I diſmiſs your book, I think myſelf concerned to vindicate one place of ſcripture more, *viz.* Rom. xi. 16, 17. which I alledged in the beginning for the confirmation of our firſt propoſition, *viz.* That God's *covenant* with Abraham, Gen. xvii. is the ſame *covenant* for ſubſtance we Gentile believers are now under. "If the firſt-fruits be holy, the lump is alſo ho-"ly: and if the root be holy, ſo are the branches. And if "ſome of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild "olive, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakeſt "of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree, boaſt not againſt the "branches," *&c.* This place is deſervedly of great value with us, to prove, that we Gentile *believers*, with our *infant-ſeed*, are inveſted under the *goſpel* with the ſame ſubſtantial privileges that the Jews and their *infants* formerly enjoyed. Here, without opening one term, you proceed, in your wonted manner, confidently to deny the arguments of our learned divines from this place. I ſhall therefore open this famous text, and regularly deduce the right of Gentile *believers infants* to *baptiſm* from it. And here, keeping to the *rules* above;

(1.) I note, that verſes 13, 14, 15. give us the true level and ſcope of the apoſtle's argument, which is to prove the calling-in-again of the Jews, though for the preſent broken off; and on this ground to excite himſelf to all diligence for their converſion, and ſuppreſs all *glorying* and *boaſting* in the Gentile *believers*, as if they were more worthy than thoſe, becauſe they fill their rooms and places.

(2.) To prove the calling again of the Jews, he argues ſtrongly, verſe 16. from the *foederal* holineſs derived to the branches from their root or anceſtors; namely, Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, with whom the *covenant* was made, Gen. xvii. "For if the firſt-fruit be holy, the lump is alſo holy; and if "the root be holy, ſo are the branches;" *i. e.* Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, being in covenant with God, a *foederal holineſs* is

from them derived to the branches. And this can be no other than a *foederal holineſs*; becauſe thoſe their anceſtors were utterly uncapable to tranſmit any inherent holineſs to them, that being the incommunicable prerogative of God. This *foederal holineſs* lying ſtill in the root (the *covenant* with Abraham) will recover the branches again to life, though at preſent many of them be broken off; as Job ſpeaks in another caſe, Job xiv. 7, 8, 9: "There is hope of a tree, though it be cut down, that it will "ſprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not "ceaſe; though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and "the ſtock thereof dry in the ground; yet through the ſcent "of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant."

(3.) We affirm, by the authority of this text, That all the Jewiſh nation was not broken off, but only a part of it: So the 17th verſe plainly declares; "And if ſome of the branches be "broken off," *&c.* Not all, but ſome; for many of them were converted to Chriſt; we read of three thouſand at one ſermon, Acts ii. and multitudes more at other times. All theſe converted Jews ſtood in the apoſtle's time as branches in the true olive, ſtill enjoying all their privileges; and that which brake off them that were broken off, was nothing elſe but their own unbelief: Ver. 20. "Well then, becauſe of unbelief they "were broken off." For at the promulgation of the goſpel, a new article was added to their *creed*; namely, That this ſame Jeſus, whom they had crucified, is the promiſed and true Meſſiah. This ſome believed, and ſo ſtood by faith, ſtill enjoying all their ancient privileges of the covenant: Others believed not, and their unbelief broke them off.

(4.) We find in this place two ſorts of branches growing upon this root Abraham; ſome natural branches; namely, Jews by nature, embracing Chriſt by faith; others wild and foreign branches, *viz.* Gentiles by nature, but ingrafted by faith, and by their ingrafture growing among the natural branches, and with them partaking of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree, *verſe* 17. that is, the rich privileges of the covenant and promiſe to Abraham, Gen. xvii. "I will be a God to thee, and to "thy ſeed." This is the ſweet juice, or fatneſs of the olive-tree, which both ſorts of branches live upon, ver. 17. ſome on the external, others on the internal; ſome on both.

(5.) Theſe naturally wild, but now ingrafted branches, *viz.* the *believing Gentiles*, being grafted by faith amongſt the natural branches, and with them ſucking the fatneſs of the ſame root and olive; that is to ſay, the privileges, ordinances, and franchiſes of the church; we cannot but judge it to be a natu-

ral, clear, and neceſſary conſequent, that the ſame privileges the natural branches once had, and the remaining branches (amongſt whom the *Gentile believers* were ingrafted) then had; the very ſame the *Gentile believers*, and their children, do now enjoy, by virtue of their intereſt in the ſame root; elſe we cannot underſtand how we ſhould be ſaid to *partake with them of the root and fatneſs of the olive*. Certainly the ſap is the ſame which the root ſends into all the branches, whether they be natural, or ingrafted ones; and is as plentifully communicated to the ingrafted, as to the natural branches: For the watering of this olive with the more rich and plentiful grace of the goſpel, muſt make the olive-tree as fat and flouriſhing as ever it was, to ſupply all its branches, and more than ever before.

Seeing then we Gentiles have (1.) the ſame grafting into the true olive; and (2.) that our preſent grafting in, is anſwerable to their preſent caſting out; and (3.) that their re-ingrafting, in the end of the world, ſhall be the ſame for ſubſtance that ours now is, and their own firſt was: For when they were firſt taken in, they, and their children, were taken in together; when they were broken off, they and their children were broken off together; and when they ſhall be taken in again, they and their children ſhall be taken in again: And (4.) ſeeing all theſe their expected mercies are ſecured to them by the covenant made with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, which will extend again to them when their *unbelief* ſhall be taken away; methinks (as was ſaid before) nothing can be clearer than this concluſion, That we Gentile believers are now inveſted with the ſame privileges they once enjoyed; and our children have the ſame *foederal holineſs* or relation to the covenants theirs had, by being grafted amongſt them, and living on the ſame ſap they did, and that by the ſame promiſe, Acts ii. 39.

But you will ſay, There is no mention here made of the grafting in of our children with us. We reply, Neither is there any mention here made of the breaking off of their *children* with them; which yet was ſo. Nor was there need to ſay it, ſeeing both their *infants* and ours are comprehended in the *parents*, as twigs are comprehended in the branch, or buds in the graft, and the one being holy, ſo is the other. And this *foederal holineſs* of the *children* is not only mentioned in this chapter, ver. 16. but alſo in 1 Cor. vii. 14. *Now are your children holy*. And the very ſame *promiſe*, which conveyed the fatneſs of the olive to Abraham's natural ſeed, manifeſtly extends itſelf to the *Gentile believers* ſeed, Acts ii. 38, 39. And if men will not ſhut their eyes, and ſtudy evaſions, what can be plain-

er from ſcripture than this explication and application of this place? We have with us the conſent of the generality of orthodox expoſitors; the ſenſe itſelf is genuine, eaſy, and unconſtrained, agreeable with the letter and ſcope of the text. Whether the ſenſe you ſet up againſt it, be as probable as this, we come next to examine. And truly, ſir, your anſwer is as ambiguous as a Delphic oracle: For (1.) you tell us, *page* 8. That the *ingrafting ſpoken of in this place, is into the inviſible church, by election.* We ſay, it is into the viſible church, by profeſſion of faith; for we know not how to underſtand any breaking off from the inviſible church, or falling from election: But it is like, you better conſidered the conſequents of that opinion, drawn upon you by Mr Sydenham, in his 85th page; and therefore, nauſeating thoſe dregs of Arminianiſm, you ſpeak more orthodoxly to the point, *page* 27.; where you honeſtly acknowledge, That the church of the Jews and Gentiles, as to the true eſſence and inward ſubſtance of either, is one and the ſame: In which reſpect, the believing Gentiles, according to the apoſtle's *metaphor*, are here ſaid to be grafted in amongſt them, and, with them, to be made partakers of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree: And in reference hereunto, it is rightly added by the apoſtle, that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance: The inward ſubſtance of the church, and covenant of grace, whereon it is founded, being invariable, and which ſhall for ever remain immoveable, though the outward form and adminiſtration be not ſo. Well then, from hence we have gained two things: (1.) That the church of the Jews and Gentiles are eſſentially and ſubſtantially the ſame church. (2.) That the Jews were not broken off from the inviſible church, or from faith and election; for theſe, you truly ſay, are invariable and immoveable: And if you had denied it, the apoſtle aſſures us, that the foundation of God ſtands ſure; and that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance. But what then was their breaking off, and the Gentiles grafting in, which made this great alteration in the church? Can it be any thing elſe, but our ingrafting into the viſible church, by the profeſſion of our faith, from whence the Jews were broken off for their unbelief? For certainly, from the inviſible church they were not broken off, and into the inviſible church, multitudes of profeſſing Chriſtians are not ingrafted. It is evident, therefore, by grafting us into the olive tree, he means the viſible church; and by the fatneſs thereof, the ordinances and privileges of that church. Though we deny not but all ſincere profeſſors are

members of the inviſible church alſo, and do belong to the election of grace; but that is not the breaking off, or grafting in, here ſpoken of.

And now, having given up Mr Tombes's notion of the inviſible church, and election, you are again put to your ſhifts; and muſt either ſhuffle, and ſeek to hide yourſelf in an heap of ſtrange and unintelligible diſtinctions, or (which had been much fairer) honeſtly have yielded the cauſe; and, wherever you meet with them, I find a whole troop of diſtinctions rallied together for this purpoſe, *page* 23, 24.

'This grafting in (ſay you) may be either into the viſible, or 'inviſible church; either by faith, profeſſion of faith, or by 'ſome outward ordinance. Children may be either grown men, 'or infants. The ingrafting in may be either certain, or pro-'bable. Certain, either by reaſon of election, or their natural 'birth, being children of believers. Probable, as being likely; 'either becauſe frequently, or for the moſt part, it happens ſo: 'Though neceſſary, and ſo not certain.' The thing to be proved, is, That the children of believers are in the covenant of free grace in Chriſt, and by virtue thereof, to be baptized into the communion of the viſible church.

Reply. Words enough, and diſtinctions enough, to reduce the text to an indiviſible point. But whither doth all this tend? I will aſk you two or three plain queſtions, and then make what uſe you pleaſe of your diſtinctions. (1.) Whether the breaking off of the Jews, and the ingrafting of the Gentiles, here ſpoken of, have relation to the *inviſible church* by election, or to the *viſible church* by profeſſion of faith, and ſome outward ordinance? (2.) Whether, if it were into the viſible church by profeſſion of faith that the Gentile believers were grafted in, as doubtleſs is was (and by relinquiſhing the former ſenſe, you here ſeem to yield it, ſaying, this ingrafture may be certain, upon the account of natural birth, being children of believers); then I would fain know, why you ſo ſtate the queſtion, as to make the certainty of believers childrens intereſt in Chriſt to be the only ground of their admiſſion into the *communion* of the *viſible church?* This (ſay you) muſt firſt be proved, or no baptiſm for them.

Alas, poor infants! to what hard terms are they here tied up? Very much harder than the terms any of your own ſociety are tied to: And if baptiſm muſt be ſuſpended, till this point can be cleared, that the perſon to be baptized be firſt in Chriſt, and in the *covenant of free grace*, as to the ſaving benefits there-; then farewel to all baptiſm, both of infants and adult pro-

ſelfors too. For how can you prove, that the perſons you baptize, are all, or any of them, really in Chriſt? May they not deceive you, as Simon Magus did Peter? I did not think you had proceeded in this matter upon a *certainty*, but a *probability*: And if you proceed with yours upon the grounds of *probability*; how come you to tie up the children of believers, to a certainty of their intereſt in Chriſt as the antecedent ſuſpendent condition of their baptiſm? We need diſpute no more about the proper ſubjects of baptiſm, for by this account we have loſt the ordinance of baptiſm itſelf.

We thought, ſir, that our childrens title to baptiſm was derived to them from their believing parents, as the children of the Jews was to circumciſion, from their circumciſed and profeſſing parents; and that the ſame promiſe which conveyed their childrens privilege to them, Gen. xvii. had conveyed the right of believers children to baptiſm unto them alſo, Acts ii. 38, 39. and that the root being holy, the branches are holy alſo, that is foederally holy, Rom. xi. 16. But to this you make ſuch an anſwer as aſtoniſhes me to read, *page* 26; where allowing Abraham to be the root, you ſay, "The holineſs here ſpoken of, 'is firſt in reſpect of God's election; holineſs perſonal and in'herent, in God's intention: Eph. i. 4. "He hath choſen us in '"him, that we ſhould be holy." (2.) It is alſo holineſs de'rivative; but not from any anceſtors, but from Abraham on'ly; and that not as a *natural*, but a *ſpiritual father*; where'in he is a lively image, or figure of Chriſt, and is derived 'from the covenant of grace, which paſſed in his name to him 'and his ſeed. And, laſtly, it ſhall be inherent, being actually 'communicated by the Spirit of God, when they ſhall be ac'tually called.'

Reply. Here we ſee into what brakes and pits men run themſelves, when they depart from the plain and ſafe path in explications of ſcripture. Here is ſuch a *tripartite diſtinction* of holineſs, as I never met with before. (1.) *Here is perſonal holineſs inherent in God's intention.* By this you muſt either mean ſanctification decreed for them, and to be beſtowed on them at the time of their calling; and then it is coincident with the third member of your diſtinction. Or elſe you mean, that it is holineſs inherent in the intention of God, as an accident in its ſubject; and then the ſimplicity of God's nature reſiſts your incongruous notion. But it would be a leſs crime, to confound the firſt with the laſt member of your vain and ſelf-created di-

stinction, than to speak things so repugnant to the simple and uncompounded nature of God.

Or if your meaning be, That this holiness is in God by way of intention, but in them by way of inhesion; that will not deliver you out of your confusion neither, but run you into greater: For then you confound the *immanent* with the *transient* acts of God, and make the same thing at the same time, to be purely in intention, and in execution; or to be only in God's purpose to bestow hereafter, and yet, at the present, inherent in the persons he intends it for: So that I must leave your strange notion of personal holiness inherent in God's intention, to be cleared by a more *metaphysical head* than mine; or else to stand, among other rare and unintelligible notions, to be admired and applauded by the ignorant reader.

But then, when we come to the second member of your distinction, I am as much at a loss to find your sense as before: For there you tell us, 'The holiness here spoken of, is a derivative holiness also; and that from Abraham only; and from him, not as a natural, but a spiritual father, resembling Christ herein.'

Reply. This word *derivative* is an equivocal word, and may signify either *inherent personal holiness*, or *foederal holiness*; for both of them are derived. If you say the former, it looks too black and horrid for me to believe you mean it, though you should say you mean it; for then you make Abraham not only the figure and image of Christ, as you speak, but Christ himself, by attributing to Abraham Christ's incommunicable property and prerogative. Then Abraham may say to all his children, as Christ doth, John xv. 4, 5. *I am the vine, ye are the branches, &c.* I am he that sanctifies you. But if you mean the last (as necessarily you must, if you mean any thing that hath orthodox sense in it) then this *derivative holiness* you speak of, is not personal holiness, or internal sanctification, but *foederal holiness*, derived from covenanted ancestors, or parents to their children; and therein you come over to us, and to the true sense of the text. But why must this be squeezed from you with so much difficulty? And why did you hide this *foederal holiness* under an equivocal term, lest you should seem to yield the controversy with a word? This is not fair.

Object. If you say we are too hasty, and triumph before the victory: For though you do yield it to be a *foederal holiness*, yet it is such as can be derived from no other father, or progenitor, but Abraham only.

Sol. Yes, sir, I hope you will allow Isaac and Jacob, at least,

to be the root and firſt-fruit, as well as Abraham, ſeeing the covenant was jointly and expreſsly made with them all three, and thereby they became root and firſt-fruit of that holy nation: And if that people be called the ſeed of Abraham, they are alſo called the ſeed of Jacob; and if father-hood be aſcribed to Abraham, it is aſcribed to Jacob too, Iſa. lviii. 14. And if Abraham be firſt named in the covenant, ſo is Jacob: See Lev. xxvii. 42. But if you allow theſe three patriarchs, perhaps that is all you will allow; for you ſeem to ſay, that no *foederal holineſs* can be derived from any other progenitors. Good ſir, whatever your own private opinion be in this matter, allow us to believe otherwiſe, as long as thoſe ſcriptures, 1 Cor. vii. 14. and Acts ii. 39. ſtand in our Bibles: For we cannot think but the foederal holineſs of *children* reſults from the immediate *parent's* faith, or covenant-intereſt, as well as from the remoter *progenitors*; elſe we cannot underſtand how the Corinthians children ſhould be holy, or how the *promiſe* ſhould belong to the children of them that are afar off, *viz.* the Gentiles, who could derive no ſuch thing to their children by a lineal deſcent from Abraham, but only as they became ingrafted branches by faith; and ſo ſuck the fatneſs of the olive to themſelves, and to their buds, or children, as the natural branches did. I deſire you to conſider alſo, how this *covenant* paſſed, as you ſay it did, to Abraham and his ſeed, in Chriſt's name, if it be the ſame with Adam's *covenant?* Did that paſs to Adam in Chriſt's name too?

I have now diſpatched what I at firſt promiſed and intended, *viz.* the confutation of my friends miſtakes about the *covenants*; and the vindication of thoſe *ſcriptures*, by which our arguments, deduced from one of them, are confirmed. And now I have no farther concernment with Mr. Cary's *ſolemn call*; ſave only to note his high confidence, raſh, and moſt unchriſtian cenſures, of all his differing friends and brethren, with which he concludes his diſcourſe; wherein he calls *infants baptiſm*,

(1.) *A great abuſe in the divine worſhip*, page 242, 243. And yet he that ſo calls it, never looked half way into the controverſy; nor is able, without manifeſt ſhuffling, and contradiction, both to the words of God, and his own words, to anſwer our arguments; as is here made too evident.

(2.) That it is no other than a change of a divine inſtitution, and making void the *commandment of Chriſt*, the horrid ſin charged by Chriſt upon thoſe *hypocrites*, the Scribes and Phariſees, Matth. xv. 6. With no better than theſe doth he rank

and aſſociate the many thouſands of God's choice and dear people, who differ in this circumſtantial point from him.

(3.) He compares it with the ſin of Nadab and Abihu; and with that of Iſrael, with reſpect to the ark, 1 Chron. xv. 13. A ſin, which provoked the Lord to execute judgment, by an immediate ſtroke in fire from heaven upon them. Thus Mr Cary is ready to *call for fire from heaven upon his brethren.* Alas, poor man! he *knows not what ſpirit he is of,* as Chriſt told the diſciples in a like caſe. It is well we are not in his hands, to execute the wrath, as well as charge the guilt upon us. But I hope all this is but raſhneſs in him.

(4.) He affirms it to be no leſs than a *tranſgreſſing of the law, a changing of the ordinances, and a breaking of the everlaſting covenant.* If it be a tranſgreſſing of the law, he ſhould have ſhewn us in what ſcripture that law that forbids it is, or where God hath repealed his former grant to the children of his covenant-people. And for the *changing of the ordinances,* I am of opinion, it is he that is guilty of that ſin, and not we: For we have proved, God ſettled this privilege upon the *infant-ſeed* of his people; that the *promiſe,* under the goſpel, continues ſtill to them; and if he exclude them from baptiſm, he changes the ordinance of God. And for breaking the everlaſting covenant, for which he cites Iſa. xxiv. 5, 6. the Lord make him ſenſible of the danger he hath put himſelf under, from that very text he produces againſt us; for it is manifeſt, that the covenant here ſpoken of, is God's covenant with Abraham, renewed with the Iſraelites at Sinai, which in that text is truly called an everlaſting covenant; when, mean time, Mr. Cary hath pronounced it to be an Adam's covenant, and now utterly aboliſhed. Who is it, ſir, that fights againſt, and changes this everlaſting covenant, you or we, that are for its continuance to us and our children?

(5.) He affirms theſe things to be of higheſt concernment to us. If ſo, then ſure it muſt follow, that repentance from dead works, and faith towards our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, muſt be inferior things to them; for nothing can be higher than the higheſt, or equal with it. And then by making them the chief fundamentals in religion, as that expreſſion doth (if it be not a vain and ſinful hyperbole) the ſalvation or damnation of men depends upon compliance or non-compliance with them. And then, whither muſt you ſend all God's people in the world, that differ from you? Sir, I find your brethren in the appendix to their confeſſion of faith, *page* 110, placing one of theſe which you make of higheſt concernment, among the other circumſtances

of religion; and doubtleſs that is in its proper place: Nor do I ſee how they can free themſelves from participation in your ſin, till they have admoniſhed you for it, and cauſed you to expunge it out of your book.

(6.) That is a ſettling of your threſholds by God's threſhold: Theſe words you recite from Ezek. xliii. 8. which ſpeak of the *idolatrous kings of Judah and Iſrael* building temples and altars for their idols, in or near the courts of the temple of God; as the *Engliſh annotations* on the text will inform you; an abomination that defiled God's holy name, a wickedneſs not to be named, and for which the Lord conſumed them, and calls it whoredom in the next words. Here, ſir, you have exceeded all the bounds of ſociety and Chriſtian charity, and made this circumſtantial difference about the proper ſubject of baptiſm the groſſeſt heatheniſh idolatry in the world; and conſequently diſſolved the bonds of Chriſtian charity, and broken off all communion with us; for with ſuch idolaters you ought not to have any communion.

Your more wiſe and moderate brethren, in the place above-cited, tell us, 'They are loth hereby to alienate their affections 'or converſations from any that fear the Lord, and are willing 'to participate of the labours of thoſe whom God hath endued 'with abilities above themſelves; qualified and called to the mi-'niſtry of the word; deſirous of peace, and not of renewed 'conteſts hereabout.' This is a language of another air: And if they be (as I dare not ſuſpect but they are) ſincere in that profeſſion, they dare not comprobate ſuch a deſperate and unchriſtian cenſure as yours is: If they do, then we may eaſily gueſs what our lot and treatment ſhall be, whenever Anabaptiſm gets the aſcendant in England; we may expect as civil uſage as is due to groſs idolaters, and no better: But I hope better things.

(7.) You ſay, that as theſe things are of higheſt concernment, ſo *they ought to be our moſt ſerious practice and endeavour*, page 243. *ult.* Good Lord! whither hath zeal for an opinion tranſported you! *Our moſt ſerious practice and endeavour!* Sir, I thought the moſt ſerious practice of a miniſter had been to preach Chriſt and ſalvation to the ſouls of men, and not to baptize: I am ſure St. Paul reckoned ſo; *Chriſt ſent me not to baptize, but to preach;* that is, baptiſm is not my principal work, or main buſineſs. And ver. 14th, he *thanks God he had baptized none of them but Criſpus and Gaius.* I believe he never uttered ſuch an expreſſion about his other work of preaching Chriſt. And for all Chriſtians, I thought the ſecuring of their

intereſt in Chriſt, living in the duties of communion with him, watching their hearts, and mortifying their corruptions, had been the object matter of their moſt ſerious practice, and faithful endeavour; and not the litigations about baptiſm. But I hope theſe were only inconſiderate expreſſions, falling from your pen, whilſt you were in a paroxiſm of zeal, or a tranſport in the height of a conceited triumph: But whatever was the cauſe, I am ſure you ought to revoke and repent ſuch words.

(8.) You wiſh *your teſtimony riſe not up at laſt as a witneſs againſt us.* Sir, we do not apprehend any cauſe we have to fear your teſtimony againſt us, or ſevereſt cenſures of us, whilſt we are ſatisfied, that as you neither have the faculty or commiſſion to be our judge, ſo neither is there any convincing evidence in your reply to our arguments. But I think you have much more cauſe to fear, leſt thoſe arguments ſhould come in at laſt as a witneſs againſt you, who deny and contemn them; when, mean time, you are put to moſt lamentable ſhifts, even contradictions, and ſomewhat worſe, to eſcape the point and edge of them.

(9.) To conclude, You tell us, we muſt not expect the ſpecial preſence of Chriſt to be afforded to us, without our compliance in theſe points with you.

Sir, we never yet deſerted the judgment or practice of infants baptiſm, and yet have had (bleſſed be Jeſus Chriſt for it) great and manifold, ſweet and ſignal proofs and evidences of his preſence with us: He hath owned and bleſſed our miniſtry to the converſion of many; and there are ſome, and thoſe not mean, or few, of our ſpiritual children, now in your ſocieties in England, who have acknowledged us to be the firſt inſtruments of their converſion: The Lord lay it not to their charge, who now deſert that miniſtry in which they firſt received Chriſt! But as for the departure of his preſence, I aſſure you, friend, I am more afraid of the rents and diviſions you now renew ſo unſeaſonably among the churches of Chriſt, than of any one thing amongſt us beſide. It grieved my ſoul to ſee you, *quieta movere*, awake a ſleeping controverſy, eſpecially in ſuch a ſeaſon, when we are little more than half delivered from our enemies and dangers; you *take us by the heel*, as Jacob did his brother, whilſt but yet in the birth. Sir, except you return to a more quiet and Chriſtian temper, than you ſeem here to be in, I am out of hope that ever you and I ſhall ſee thoſe bleſſed days, we have ſo often, with pleaſure, comforted ourſelves with the hopes of. However, extend

your charity (if you have any left) so far; as to believe that I am one, notwithstanding of all this, that am studious of the church's peace, and inquisitive into the rules of duty, not daring to hold any truth of God in unrighteousness; and yet well satisfied I am, in the path of my duty, wherein, though we cannot walk together, yet I hope to meet you at the end of our way, in our Father's house, where perfect light and peace dwells.

And here I had put an end to this debate, had I not received your return to some of these sheets, whilst the last of them was under my hand; wherein I only find four things in which I am concerned. In general, you tell me, 'You are not convinced of any error, by what I have said.' I am sorry to hear it: But considering the nature of error on one side, and the difficulty of self-denial on the other, you have not much deceived my expectation. More particularly,

(1.) You say, As to your hooking the Sinai covenant into this controversy, I gave you the first occasion of it; for when you shewed me your papers about God's covenant with Abraham, I told you, that you were best first to try if you could prove the covenant at Sinai to be a covenant of works; forasmuch as our divines are so far from conceiting the covenant with Abraham to be a covenant of works, that they will not allow the Sinai law itself to be so; and to convince you of it, I lent you Mr. Roberts and Mr. Sedgwick on the covenant, to enlighten and satisfy you about it: But little did I think you had confidence enough to enter the lists with two such learned and eminent divines, and make them to follow your triumphant chariot, shackled with the incomparable Baxter and Allen, Sydenham and Burthogg, like three pair of noble prisoners of war. But whatever was the occasion (setting aside your sin) I am not sorry you have given a fit opportunity to enlighten the world in that point also.

(2.) You seem to fancy in your letter, that I once was of your opinion about the moral law, because you find these passages in a sermon of mine, upon John viii. 36. "If the Son "therefore shall make you free, then are you free indeed;" *viz.*

'That the law required perfect working, under pain of that 'curse; accepted no short endeavours, admitted no repent-'ance, and gave no strength.' But finding me here pleading for the law, you think you find me in a contradiction to that doctrine.

The words I own; the contradiction I poſitively deny; for I ſpeak not there, and here, *ad idem*; for in that ſermon, and in thoſe very words you cite, I ſpeak againſt the law, not as God intended it, when he added it to the promiſe; but as the ignorance and infidelity of unregenerate men, make it to themſelves a covenant of works, by looking upon it as the very rule and reaſon of their juſtification before God: This was the ſtumbling-ſtone at which all legal juſticiaries then did, and ſtill do ſtumble, Rom. ix. 31, 32, 33. In this ſenſe the apoſtle, in his epiſtles to the Romans and Galatians, argues againſt the law, and ſo do I in the words you cite; but vindicate the law in the very ſame ſermon you mention, as conſiſtent with, and ſubſervient to Chriſt, in the former ſenſe; and there tell you, 'The law ſends us to Chriſt to be juſtified; and Chriſt ſends us 'back to the law to be regulated.' The very ſame double ſenſe of the law you will find in this diſcourſe; and from the miſtaken end and abuſe of the law, which the apoſtle ſo vehemently oppoſeth, I here prove againſt you, that the law in this ſenſe cannot conſiſt with, or be added to, the promiſe; and therefore make it my medium to prove againſt you, that the true nature and denomination of the Sinai law, can never be found in this ſenſe of it, but it muſt be eſtimated and denominated from the purpoſe and intention of God, which I have proved to be evangelical. Try your ſkill to faſten a contradiction betwixt my words in that ſermon and this diſcourſe.

I know you would be glad to find the ſhadow of one, to make ſome ſmall excuſe, or atonement for the many faults of that nature you have here committed.

(3.) Your letter alſo informs me, that you hear you are anſwered by one hand already; and, for ought you know, many more may be employed againſt you, and I for one; and ſo we ſhall compaſs you about like bees.

Reply. I have only ſeen Mr. Whiſton's little book againſt your brother Grantham, wherein he hath baffled two of your principal arguments; but you only come in collaterally there, and muſt not look upon it as a full anſwer to your book, but only as a laſh for your folly, *en paſſant.* And for our compaſſing you about like bees, methinks you ſeem to be elated in your own fancy, by the ſuppoſition, or expectation, of a multitude of opponents. You know as well as I, who it is that glories in this motto, *Unus contra omnes.* Sir, I think your mind may be much at reſt in that matter. Of all the ſix famous adverſaries mentioned in your title page, there are but

two living: and you know, *Mortui non mordent;* and of the remaining two, one of them, *viz.* Mr. Baxter, is almost in heaven, living in the daily views, and chearful expectations of the *saints everlasting rest with GOD;* and is left for a little while among us, as a great example of the life of faith. And it is questionable with me, whether such a great and heavenly soul can find any leisure or dispostion to attend such a weak and trivial discourse as this.

And as for myself, you need not much fear me; I have not, neither do I intend to vibrate my sting against you, unless I find you infecting or disturbing that hive to which I belong, and to which I am daily gathering and carrying honey; and then who but a drone would not sting.

(4.) To conclude: in the close of your letter you fall into the former strain of love, assuring me, 'That the ancient friend-'ship of so many years, shall still continue on your part.'

Reply. All that I shall return to this, is only to relate a short story out of Plutarch, in the life of Alexander; where he tells us, That whilst he was warring in the Indies, one Taxiles an Indian king, came with his company to meet him; and saluting Alexander, said, 'What need you and I to fight and 'war one upon another? If thou comest not to take away our 'water, and the necessaries of life from us, for which we 'must needs fight: As for other goods, if I am richer than 'thee, I am ready to give thee of mine; and if I have less, I 'will not think scorn to thank thee for thine.' Alexander, highly pleased with his words, made him this reply; 'Think-'est thou, that this meeting of ours can be without fighting? 'No, no; thou hast won nothing by all thy fair words; for I 'will fight and contend with thee in honesty and courtesy, 'and thou shalt not exceed me in bounty and liberality.'

I say with Taxiles, I had never armed against you, had you not come to take away our water, and the necessaries of life; I mean, the covenant of God with Abraham, which contains the rich charter of the Gentile believers children, and make it an abolished Adam's covenant, and told us, that we must come up to the primitive purity in these things; that is, in renouncing it as a covenant of grace, and relinquishing infants baptism, as grounded thereon.

Sir, were my own father alive, I must and would oppose him, should he attempt what here you do. Infant-baptism, with you is not; *singing of psalms*, that plain and heavenly gospel ordinance, with you, is not; and will you take away our

Benjamin also? What! the covenant of God with Abraham and his children in their generations? *All these things are against us.* No, sir, we cannot part with that covenant, as an abolished Adam's covenant, nor will I give it up for all the friendship in the world.

And yet I will say with Alexander, I will contend with you in friendship and courtesy, even whilst I earnestly contend against you for the truths of GOD, which you have here opposed, and I have endeavoured to vindicate.

One word more before I part with you; I do assure you, and the whole world, that in this controversy with you, I have not, knowingly or advisedly, misrepresented your sense: If you shall say I did so in my second argument, from the words, *pag.* 179, I assure you, both myself, and others, could understand you no otherwise than I did in the papers I sent you; and when you told me, you meant there was no pardon in either of those covenants, but that it plainly directed to Abraham's covenant, you will find, I have given you as fair a choice as you can desire, either to stand to your words in the first sense, wherein I understood them, or (which will be the same to me) to your own sense, in which you afterwards explained it to me. And whereas I blame you over and over in my epistle and conclusion, for putting the proper subject of baptism amongst the highest things in religion; let the reader view your conclusion, and see, whether you do, or not. If you say, you speak of the covenant there, as well as of baptism, I allow that you do so; yet I hope it is equally as bad, nay, in deed and truth, a great aggravation of your fault, to make this article, *viz.* God's *covenant with* Abraham, Gen. xvii. *an abolished Adam's covenant*, one of the highest concernments of a Christian, the baptism only of adult believers another. My consequences, from your words, are just and regular, how surprizing soever they seem to you.

If you think fit to rejoin to this my answer, I desire you will avoid, as much as you can, a tedious harangue of words, and speak strictly and regularly to my arguments, by limiting, distinguishing, or denying, as a disputant ought to do: If so, I promise you a reply; but if I find no such thing, it shall pass with me but for waste paper; nor will I waste time about it. The Lord give us unity in things necessary, liberty in things indifferent, and charity in all things!

SACRAMENTAL MEDITATIONS

Upon divers ſelect Places of

SCRIPTURE.

WHEREIN

BELIEVERS are aſſiſted in preparing their HEARTS, and exciting their AFFECTIONS and GRACES, when they draw nigh to GOD in that moſt awful and ſolemn ORDINANCE of the LORD's SUPPER.

TO THE READER.

Chriſtian Reader,

CHRIST may be ſaid to be crucified three ways; by the Jews *actually*, in the ſacrament *declaratively*, and by unbelievers at his table *interpretatively*. Among ſins, blood-guiltineſs is reckoned one of the moſt henious; and of all blood-guiltineſs, to be guilty of the blood of Chriſt, is a ſin of the deepeſt guilt, and will be avenged with the moſt dreadful puniſhment, 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29. If vengeance be taken ſeven-fold on him that ſlew Cain, what vengeance ſhall be taken on him that *crucifies afreſh the Lord of glory?*

The heavieſt blow of divine juſtice is ſtill ready to avenge the abuſe of the beſt mercy: what can the heart of man conceive more ſolemn, more ſacred, or more deeply affective, than the repreſentation of the moſt gracious love of the Father, and the moſt grievous paſſion of the Son? What ſin can be more provoking to God, than the ſlight and contempt of thoſe moſt awful myſteries? And what puniſhment can be more terrible, than for ſuch a wretched ſoul to eat and drink damnation to itſelf? Melancthon records a very dreadful example of God's righteous judgment upon a company of profane wretches, who, in a tragedy, intended to act the death of Chriſt upon the croſs. He that acted the ſoldier's part, inſtead of piercing with his ſpear a bladder full of blood hid under his garment, wounded him to death that was upon the croſs, who falling dow

killed him, who (in a disguise) acted the part of the woman that stood wailing under the cross. His brother, who was first slain slew the murderer, who acted the soldier's part, and for slaying him was hanged by order of justice. Thus did the vengeance of God speedily overtake them, and hanged them up in chains, for a warning, to all that should ever dare to dally with the great and jealous God.

These are terrible strokes, and yet not so terrible as those which are more ordinarily, but less sensibly, inflicted on the inner man for the abuse of this ordinance.

To prevent these judgments, and obtain those blessings which come through this ordinance, great regard must be had to two things; *viz.* 1. The in-being. 2. The activity of true grace.

First, Examine thyself, reader, whether there be any gracious principle planted in thy soul, whereby thou art alive indeed unto God. It was an ancient abuse of the sacrament (condemned and cast out by the * Carthaginian council) to give it unto dead men. Dead souls can have no communion with the living God, no more benefit from this table than the Emperor's guests had from his table, where loaves of gold were set before them to eat. There is more than a shew of grace in the sacrament; it hath not only the visible sign, but the spiritual grace also, which it represents. See that there be more than a shew and a visible sign of grace also in thy soul, when thou comest nigh to the Lord in that ordinance: see to the exercise and activity, as well as to the truth and sincerity of thy grace.

Even a believer himself doth not eat and drink worthily, unless the grace that is in him be excited and exercised at this ordinance.

It is not faith inhering, but faith realizing, applying and powerfully working. It is not a disposition to humiliation for sin, but the actual thawing and melting of the heart for sin; "whilst thou lookest on him whom thou hast pierced, and "mourneſt for him as one that mourneth for his only son, for "his first-born:" nor is it a disposition or principle of love to Christ that is only required, but the stirring up of that fire of love, the exciting of it into a vehement flame.

I know the excitations and exercises of grace are attended with great difficulties: they are not things within our command, and at our beck. Oh! it is hard, it is hard indeed, reader, e-

* Concil. Carthag. Can. 6. *Placuit ut defunctorum coporibus non detur eucharistia*, &c.

ven after God hath taken the heart of ſtone out of thee, and given thee an heart of fleſh, to mourn actually for ſin, even when ſo great an occaſion and call is given thee to that work at the Lord's table; for the ſame power is requiſite to excite the act that was required to plant the habit. *Gratia gratiam poſtulat.*

However, the duty is thine, though the power be God's; why elſe are his people blamed, becauſe they ſtirred not up themſelves to take hold of him? Iſa. lxiv. 7.

To aſſiſt thee in this work, ſome help is offered in the following meditations: it is true, it is not the reading of the beſt meditations another can prepare for thee, that will alter the temper of thy heart, except the Spirit of God concur with theſe truths, and bleſs them to thy ſoul: but yet theſe helps muſt not be ſlighted, becauſe they are not ſelf-ſufficient. "Man lives "not by bread alone; but by every word that proceedeth out "of the mouth of God;" yet it were a fond vanity, and ſin, for any man, upon that ground, to caſt away bread, and expect to live by a miracle without it. We muſt lift up our hearts to God for a bleſſing, and then eat. Do the ſame here: firſt pray; then read; and the Lord quicken thee by it for duty.

There are two things of ſpecial concernment to thee, reader, when thou art to addreſs thyſelf to any ſolemn duty, eſpecially ſuch as this.

1. Prepare for thy duty diligently.
2. Rely not upon thy preparations.

1. Prepare with all diligence for thy duty. Take pains with thy dull heart; cleanſe thy polluted heart; compoſe thy vain heart; remember how great a preſence thou art approaching. If * Auguſtus thus reproved one, that entertained him without ſuitable preparation, ſaying, 'I did not think we had been 'ſo familiar;' much more may thy God reprove thee, for thy careleſs neglect of due preparation for him.

2. But yet take heed, on the other ſide, that thou rely not upon thy beſt preparation. It is an ingenious, and true note of Luther, † (ſpeaking to this very point of preparation for the ſacrament) 'Never are men more unfit, than when 'they think themſelves moſt fit, and beſt prepared for their 'duty; never more fit, than when moſt humbled and aſham-'ed, in a ſenſe of their own unfitneſs.'

* *Non putabam me tibi tam familiarem.*
† *Tunc poſſime diſpoſitus, quando aptiſſime.*

That the bleſſing of God, and the breathings of his good Spirit, may accompany theſe poor labours to thy ſoul, is the heart's deſire of,

Thy ſervant in Chriſt,

JOHN FLAVEL.

THE FIRST MEDITATION, UPON

PSAL. lxxxix. 7. *God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of his ſaints, and to be had in reverence of all that are about him.*

THERE are ſpecial ſeaſons, wherein the ſaints approach near unto God in this life, and wherein the Lord comes near unto them.

It pleaſeth the Majeſty of heaven, ſometimes to admit poor worms of the earth to ſuch ſenſible and ſweet perceptions of himſelf, as are found above all expreſſion, and ſeem to be a tranſient glance upon that glory, which glorified eyes more ſteadily behold above: "Believing, we rejoice with joy unſpeak-"able, and full of glory;" or, * glorified joy; as it is, 1 Pet. i. 8. And yet how ſweet and excellent ſoever theſe foretaſtes of heaven are, heaven itſelf will be an unſpeakable ſurpriſe to the ſaints, when they ſhall come thither.

Now among all thoſe ordinances, wherein the bleſſed God manifeſts himſelf to the children of men, none are found to ſet forth more of the joy of his preſence, than that of the Lord's ſupper: at that bleſſed table, are ſuch ſenſible embraces betwixt Chriſt and believers, as do afford delight and ſolace, beyond the joy of the whole earth.

And where ſuch ſpecial manifeſtations of God are, ſuitable diſpoſitions and preparations ſhould be found on our part, to meet the Lord.

And, certainly, we ſhall find reaſon enough for it, if we will conſider the importance of this ſcripture before us; "God is "greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of his ſaints, and to be

* Αγαλλιασθε χαρα ανεκλαλητω και δεδοξασμενη. *Inenarrabili, & glorificato.* Montanus.

" had in reverence of all that are round about him." Wherein we have, 1. The object; 2. The subject; 3. The mode of divine worship.

First, The object of worship, God; God is to be feared. In all divine worship, men and angels have to do with God. " All things (saith the apostle) are open and naked to the " eyes of him with whom we have to do," Heb. iv. 14. With whom we have speech, or business; so it may be understood. When we worship, we draw nigh to God; and that about the greatest concerns, and weightiest business in the world.

Secondly, The subject, or the persons that approach unto God in his worship; " His saints, and all that are about him." By saints, many interpreters do (in this place) understand the angels, called saints, from the purity and holiness of their nature; and so make the next clause exegetical of this. Those that before were called saints in respect of their nature, are, in the next words said to be such as are round about him, his satellites, attendants, or those that stand as servants about him, to do his pleasure; where they are described by their office. Both these seem to be grounded upon the precedent verses: " Who in heaven can be compared to the Lord? Who among " the sons of the mighty," (or of God, so the angels are called, Job i. 6.) " can be likened to the Lord?" And though it be true, that the angels worship, and serve the Lord with the greatest reverence and dread (for these are his nigh ones, or such as are round about him;) yet there is no necessity to limit this scripture so narrowly, by excluding the people of God on earth; they also are his saints, and more frequently so stiled, though they be saints of a lower class and order: and they also are round about him, as well as the angels; and when they worship him, he is in the midst of them, Matth. xviii. 20. And the place where they assemble to worship, is called the place of his feet, Isa. lx. 13. But if we find not the saints on earth in the direct and immediate sense of this text, yet we must needs meet them in the rebound and consequence. For if creatures so much above us, as the angels, do perform their service, and pay their homage to the highest Majesty with so much fear and reverence; shall not inferior creatures, the poor worms of the earth, tremble at his presence? And this brings us to the third thing; namely,

Thirdly, The mode, or manner, in which the worship of God is to be performed; *viz.* with great fear and reverence:

"God is greatly to be feared" Piscator translates it, *Vehementer formidandus*, to be vehemently feared; and opposes it to that formal, careless, trifling, vain spirit, which too often is found in those that approach the Lord in the duties of his worship. The observation from hence will be this:

Observation. *That the greatest composedness and seriousness of spirit is due to God, from all those that draw nigh unto him in his worship.*

And this is no more than what the Lord expressly requires at our hands; Lev. x. 3. "I will be sanctified in them that "come nigh unto me." So Heb xii. 28, 29. "Let us have "grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence "and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire."

And as this disposition and temper of spirit is due to every act and part of God's worship; so (to accommodate this general to our particular occasion) it is especially due to this great and solemn ordinance of the Lord's supper.

It is the observation of the Casuists, that *sacramentum et mortis articulus aequiparantur:* The sacrament of the Lord's supper, and the very point of death, require equal seriousness; a man's spirit should be as deeply solemn and composed at the Lord's table, as upon a death-bed. We should go to that ordinance, as if we were then going into another world.

The primitive Christians used to sit up whole nights in meditation and prayer, before their participation of the Lord's supper; and these nights were called Vigiliae, their *watches*. Such was the reverence the saints had for this ordinance (which they usually called *mysterium tremendum*, a tremendous mystery,) that they would not give "sleep to their eyes, or slumber "to their eye-lids," when so great and solemn a day drew near. *Chrysost. lib.* 3. *de sacerdot.*

And that all this solemn preparation is no more than needs, will convincingly appear to us, upon the following grounds and reasons.

Reason 1. From the solemn nature and ends of this ordinance. For what is the express design and use of it, but a lively representation of the Lord's death? 1 Cor. xi. 26. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew "the Lord's death till he come." Jesus Christ is therein set forth crucified before us; and not to make a bare representation of it to us, as a thing wherein we have no personal interest or concernment, but to represent his death lively, and seal our title to it firmly: "This is my body, which is broken for you,"

Now, which of these is to be attended with a dead, careless, and slight spirit? Is it the representation of Christ's death? God forbid! Oh! if there be any subject of meditation in the world, able to drink up the very spirit of a man, this is it!

The sun fainted, the heavens mourned in black, the very rocks rent in pieces, when this tragedy was acted; and shall our hearts be more senseless and obdurate than they, at the representation of it? But, lo! here is more than a representation: Christ is set forth in this ordinance, as crucified for you; as suffering, and enduring all this, in your room and stead. Now,

Suppose, reader, thyself to be justly condemned to the torture of the rack, or strappado; and that thy father, brother, or dearest friend, preferring thy life to his own, would become thy ANTIPSYXOS, *ransomer*, by undergoing the torment for thee; and all that is left for thee to suffer, were only by way of sympathy with him: suppose now thyself standing by that engine of torture, and beholding the members of thy dear friend distorted, and all out of joint; hearing his doleful groans, extorted by the extremity of anguish; and under all these torments, still maintaining a constant love to thee; not once repenting his torments for thee; couldest thou stand there with dry eyes? Could thy heart be unaffected, and stupid at such a sight? Write him rather a beast, a stone, than a man, that could do so.

But this is not all: the believer's interest in Christ is sealed, as well as the sufferings of Christ represented, in this ordinance.

And is a sealed interest in Christ so cheap or common a thing, as that it should not engage, yea, swallow up all the powers of thy soul? Oh! what is this? what is this?

The seal of God, set to the soul of a poor sinner, to confirm and ratify its title to the person of Christ, and the inestimable treasures of his blood. Surely, as the sealing up of a man to damnation, is the sum of all misery; and that poor creature that is so sealed, hath cause enough to mourn and wail to eternity; so the sealing up of a soul to salvation, is the sum of all mercy and happiness; and the soul that is so sealed, hath cause enough to lie at the feet of God, overwhelmed with the sense of so invaluable a mercy.

Reason 2. As the nature and ends of this ordinance call for the greatest composedness of spirit; so the danger of unworthy receiving, should work our hearts to the most serious frame: for if a man be here without his wedding-garment, if he eat and drink unworthily, it is at the greatest peril of hi

ſoul that he doth ſo; 1 Cor. xi. 27. "Wherefore, whoſoever "ſhall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unwor- "thily, ſhall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."

To profane and undervalue that body and blood of the Lord, is a ſin above meaſure ſinful; and the puniſhments of ſuch ſins, will be the moſt dreadful: for ſtill the more excellent the bleſſings are that come by any ordinance, the more dread- ful the curſes are, that avenge the abuſe of ſuch mercies. How ſoon may a man draw fearful guilt upon his ſoul, and dread- ful judgments upon his body, by an heedleſs management of ſuch ſacred myſteries? "For this cauſe many are weak and "ſickly among you, and many ſleep;" verſe 30.

It is a moſt weighty *note*, that a * worthy pen ſets upon this ſcripture: 'They diſcerned not the body of his Son Jeſus 'Chriſt, in his ordinances; but inſtead of that holy, reverend 'and deep-dyed behaviour, which was due to it, both from 'their inner and outward man, as being a creature of the 'higheſt and deepeſt ſanctification, that ever God ſanctified; 'ſanctified not only to a more excellent and glorious conditi- 'on; but alſo to many ends and purpoſes, of far higher and 'dearer concernment, both for the glory of God, and benefit 'of men themſelves, than all other creatures whatſoever, whe- 'ther in heaven or earth: They handled, and dealt by it in 'both kinds, as if it had been a common unſanctified thing: 'Thus they diſcerned not the Lord's body.'

And as they diſcerned not his body, ſo neither did God (in ſome ſenſe) diſcern theirs; but in thoſe ſore ſtrokes and heavy judgments which he inflicted on them, had them in no other regard or conſideration, than as if they had been the bodies of his enemies, the bodies of wicked and ſinful men; thus draw- ing the model and platform of their puniſhment (as uſually he doth) from the ſtructure and proportion of their ſin.

Thus the juſt and righteous God builds up the breaches that we make upon the honour belonging to the body of his Son, with the ruins of that honour which he had given unto ours, in health, ſtrength, life, and many other outward comforts and ſupports.

O then what need is there of a moſt awful and compoſed ſpirit, when we approach the Lord in this ordinance?

Reaſon 3. As the danger of unworthy receiving ſhould com- poſe us to the greateſt ſerioufneſs, ſo the remembrance of that frame and temper Chriſt's Spirit was in, when he actually ſuf-

* Mr. Tho. Goodwin's epiſtle to Mr. Fenner's ſermons.

fered thoſe things for us, ſhould compoſe our ſpirits, into a frame more ſuitable and agreeable to his. When we ſee his death, as it were acted over again before our eyes: Was his heart roving and wandering in that day? Did he not regard and mind the work he was going about? Was his heart, like thine, ſtupid, and unaffected with theſe things? Look but upon that text, Luke xxii. 44. and you ſhall ſee whether it were ſo, or not. It is ſaid (when this tragedy drew nigh, and his enemies were ready to ſeize him in the garden) That being "in "an agony, he prayed more earneſtly; and his ſweat was, "as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground." And Matth. xxvi. 38. he ſaith, "My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful, "even unto death." His *ſoul* was full of ſorrow: And is thine full of ſtupidity? God forbid!

If thy heart be cold, Chriſt's was hot: If thou canſt not ſhed a tear, he poured out clods of blood from every part. O, how unſuitable is a dry eye, and hard heart, to ſuch an ordinance as this!

Reaſon 4. As the frame Chriſt's Spirit was in at his death, ſhould command the moſt ſolemn frame upon our ſpirits, at the recognizing of it; ſo the things here repreſented, require, and call for the higheſt exerciſe of every grace of the Spirit in our ſouls: For we come not thither as idle ſpectators, but as active inſtruments, to glorify God, by exerciſing every grace upon Chriſt, as crucified for us. Behold here are, among the reſt,

Firſt, The proper object of faith.

Secondly, The flowing ſpring of repentance.

Thirdly, The powerful attractive of love.

Firſt, The proper object of faith is here. This ordinance, as a glaſs, repreſents to thine eye that glorious Perſon, of whom the Father ſaid, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I "am well pleaſed," Matth. xvii. 5. Of whom he ſaid, "I "have laid help upon one that is mighty." This was he that "was made ſin for us, who had no ſin, that we might be "made the righteouſneſs of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21. Who trode the wine-preſs alone, and is here to be ſeen in his red garments. Every drop of his precious blood hath a tongue, calling for faith to behold it, poured forth as a ſacrifice to God for ſin. "This (ſaith he) is the cup of the New Teſtament "in my blood, which was ſhed for many, for the remiſſion "of ſins."

And what footing could thy faith find for pardon and ſalvation any where elſe? It is Chriſt crucified that faith claſps, as the laſt and only hope and refuge of a poor ſinner: Here a

believers drop anchor. This is that bleſſed object, on whom they take the dead gripe, or laſt graſp, when their eye-ſtrings and heart-ſtrings are breaking. When you ſee the blood of Chriſt flowing forth, how can faith be ſilent in thy ſoul? When he bids thee, as it were, to put thy finger into his ſide, ſhews thee his hands, and his feet there; it will cry out in thy ſoul, *My Lord! and my God!*

Secondly, The flowing ſpring of repentance is here. If there be any fire that can melt, or hammer that can break a hard heart, here it is; Zech. xii. 10. "They ſhall look upon me, "whom they have pierced, and mourn." Nothing lays a gracious ſoul lower in itſelf, than to ſee how low Chriſt was laid in his humiliation for it.

Here the evil of ſin is alſo repreſented in the cleareſt glaſs, that ever the eye of man ſaw it in. The ſufferings of the Son of God diſcover the evil of ſin, more than the everlaſting torments of the damned can do. So that, if there be but one drop of ſpiritual ſorrow in the heart of a Chriſtian; here, methinks, it ſhould be ſeen dropping from the eye of faith.

Thirdly, The moſt attractive object of love is here. Put all created beauties, excellencies, and perfections together; and what are they but blackneſs and deformity, compared with the lovely Jeſus? *My beloved* (ſaith the enamoured ſpouſe) *is white and ruddy*, Cant. v. 10. Behold him at the table, in his perfect innocency, and unparalleled ſufferings! This is He "who was rich, but for our ſakes became poor; that we, "through his poverty, might be rich," 2 Cor. viii. 9. This is he that parted with his honour firſt, and his life next; yea, he parted with his honour in his incarnation, that he might be capable to part with his life for our redemption.

Behold here the degrees of his ſufferings, and by them meaſure the degrees of his love. Behold in his death, as in the deluge, all the fountains beneath, and the windows of heaven above, opened; the wrath of God, the cruelty of men, the fury of hell, breaking in together upon him, and his ſoul ſurrounded with ſorrow; and how can this be repreſented, and thy ſoul not aſtoniſhed at this amazing, matchleſs love of Chriſt? Surely one flame doth not more naturally produce another, than the love of Chriſt, thus repreſented to a gracious ſoul, doth produce love to Chriſt, and that in the moſt intenſe degree.

Uſe 1. How naturally doth this doctrine ſhame and humble the beſt hearts, for their ſinful diſcompoſures, vanity, and deadneſs; for the rovings and wanderings of their hearts, even

when they come near the Lord in such a solemn ordinance as this is?

The holiest man upon earth may lay his hand upon his breast, and say, 'Lord, how unsuitable is this heart of mine, 'to such an object of faith, as is here presented to me? Doth 'such a temper of spirit suit thine awful presence? Should 'the represented agonies and sufferings of Christ for me, be 'beheld with a spirit no more concerned, pierced, and wounded 'for sin? O how can I look upon him whom I have pierced, and not mourn, and be in bitterness for him, as for an 'only son, a first-born! O the stupifying and benumbing 'power of sin! O the efficacy of unbelief!'

It was charged upon the Israelites, as the great aggravation of their sin, that they "provoked God at the sea, even at the "red sea," Psal. cvi. 7. the place where their miraculous salvation was wrought. But, Lord Jesus! my hard heart provokes thee in an higher degree, even at the *red sea* of thy precious invaluable blood, by which my eternal salvation was wrought. O my God! what a heart have I? Did the blood of Christ run out so freely and abundantly for me; and cannot I shed one tear for my sins, that pierced him? O let me never be friends with my own heart, till it love Christ better, and hate sin more.

Use 2. This scripture hath also an awakening voice, to all that come nigh to God in any of his ordinances, especially in this ordinance. O Christians! bethink yourselves where you are, and what you are doing: Know you not, that the King comes in to see the guests? Yea, you do know, that God is in this place; an awful Majesty beholds you! "All the churches "shall know, that I am he that searcheth the heart and the reins, "and will give to every one as his work shall be," Rev. ii. 23.

Thy business, Christian, is not with men, but with God; and the solemnest business that ever thy thoughts were conversant about. Thou art here to recognize the sufferings of thy Redeemer; to take the seals and pledges of thy salvation from the hand of his Spirit: Imagine the same thing, which is now to be done spiritually, and by the ministry of faith, were but to be performed visibly and audibly, by the ministry of thy senses.

Suppose Jesus Christ did personally shew himself at this table, and were pleased to make himself known in breaking of bread, as once he did to the disciples. Suppose thou sawest him appear at this table as he doth now appear in heaven, *as a Lamb that had been slain:* Imagine thou heardst him say, 'Believer, this precious blood of mine was shed for

'thee: There be millions of men and women in the world, 'naturally as good as thee, that ſhall have no intereſt in it, 'or benefit by it: But for thee, it was ſhed, and for the re-'miſſion of thy ſins; my blood was the only thing in the 'world that was equal to the deſert of thy ſins, and it hath 'made full ſatisfaction to God for them all: Thy ſins, which 'are many, are therefore forgiven thee: My blood hath pur-'chaſed the eternal inheritance of glory for thee; and this 'day I am come to deliver the ſeals and pledges thereof into 'thine hand. Take then the ſeals of eternal ſalvation this 'day, take thine own Chriſt with all that he is, and hath; 'in thine arms. Whatever I have ſuffered, done, or procur-'ed for any of my ſaints; I have ſuffered, done, and procur-'ed the ſame for thee."

Why, all this is here to be done, as really and truly, tho' in a more ſpiritual way, at this table. And ſhall not ſuch buſi-neſs as this is, fully fix and engage thy heart? What then ſhall do it?

Awake, faith; awake, repentance; awake, love; yea, let all the powers of my ſoul be thoroughly awakened this day to attend the Lord.

THE SECOND MEDITATION, UPON

JER. xii. 2. *Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins.*

THIS ſcripture gives us the character and deſcription of an hypocrite: And he is here deſcribed two ways; *viz.*

1. By what he hath.
2. By what he hath not.

Firſt, The hypocrite is deſcribed by what he hath: He hath God in his mouth; "Thou art near in their mouth;" *i. e.* They profeſs with a full mouth, that they are thy people, ſaith Piſcator; or, they ſpeak much about the law (as another explains it); God, and his temple, religion, with its rites, are much talked of among them; they have him in their prayers and duties; and this is all that the hypocrite hath of God; re-

ligion only sanctifies his tongue; that seems to be dedicated to God; but it penetrates no farther. And therefore,

Secondly, He is described by that he hath not, or by what he wants: *And* (or, but) *thou art far from their reins; i. e.* They feel not the power and influences of that name, which they so often invocate and talk of, going down to their very reins, and affecting their very hearts. So we must understand this metaphorical expression here, as the opposition directs: For the reins, having so great and sensible a sympathy with the heart, (which is the seat of the affections and passions,) upon that account, it is usual in scripture, to put the reins for those intimate and secret affections, thoughts, and passions of the heart, with which they have so near cognation, and so sensible a sympathy. When the heart is under great consternation, the loins or reins are seized also. As Dan. v. 6. Then the "king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts "troubled him, and the joints of his loins were loosed." On the contrary, when the heart is filled with delight and gladness, the reins are said to rejoice; Prov. xxiii. 16. "Yea, my "reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right:" *Totus lætitia dissiliam*; "I shall even leap for joy." So then, when the prophet saith, "God is far from the reins of the hypocrite;" the meaning is, he feels not the heart-affecting influence and power of religion upon his heart and affections, as God's people do. And hence the note will be,

Doct. *That God comes nearer to the hearts and reins of his people in their duties, than he doth to any hypocritical, or formal professor.*

By God's nearness, we understand not his omnipresence (that neither comes nor goes) nor his love to his people (that abides); but the sensible, sweet manifestations, and outlets of it to their souls. So in Psal. cxlv. 18. "The Lord is nigh un-"to all that call upon him, unto all that call upon him in "truth."

Note, the restriction and limitation of this glorious privilege; it is the peculiar enjoyment of sincere and uptright-hearted worshippers. Others may have communion with duties, but not with God in them.

But that God comes nigh, very nigh, to upright hearts in their duties, is a truth as sensibly manifest to spiritual persons, as that they are nigh the fire, when they feel the comfortable heat of it refreshing them in a cold season, when they are al-

moſt ſtarved and benumbed with cold. Three things make this evident.

Firſt, Sincere ſouls are ſenſible of God's acceſſes to them in their duties, they feel his approaches to their ſpirits; Lam. iii. 57. "Thou dreweſt near in the day that I called upon thee; "thou ſaidſt, Fear not." And what a ſurprize was that to the church; Cant. ii. 8. "It is the voice of my beloved; behold, "he cometh," *&c.* Certainly there is a felt preſence of God, which no words can make another to underſtand; they feel that fountain flowing abundantly into the dry pits, the heart fills apace, the empty thoughts ſwell with a fulneſs of ſpiritual things, which ſtrive for vent.

Secondly, They are ſenſible of God's receſſes, and withdrawment from their ſpirits; they feel how the ebb follows the flood, and how the waters abate. So you find it in Cant. v. 6. "I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had with-"drawn himſelf, and was gone; my ſoul failed when he "ſpake: I ſought him, but I could not find him; I called, "but he gave me no anſwer." The Hebrew is very pathetical; *He was gone, was gone.* A ſad change of the frame of her heart quickly followed.

Thirdly, The Lord's nearneſs to the hearts and reins of his people in their duties, is evident to them from the effects that it leaves upon their Spirits. For look, as it is with the earth and plants, with reſpect to the approach or remove of the ſun in the ſpring and autumn; ſo it is here as Chriſt ſpeaks, Luke xxi. 29. "When ye ſee the fig-tree, and all the trees, ſhoot "forth, ye know that ſummer is nigh at hand." An approaching ſun renews the face of the earth, and makes nature ſmile. The trees bud and bloſſom, the fiſhes riſe, the birds ſing; it is a kind of reſurrection to nature from the dead. So it is when the Lord comes near the hearts and reins of men in duty: For then they find that,

Dr. Preſton, whendying, ſaid, I ſhall change my my place, not company.

Firſt, A real taſte of the joy of the Lord is here given to men, the fulneſs whereof is in heaven; hence called, 2 Cor. i. 22. "The "earneſt of his Spirit." And 1 Pet. i. 8. *Glorified joy*, or a ſhort ſalvation. Oh! what is this! what is this! Certainly it is ſomething that hath no affinity with fleſh, or groſs corporeal pleaſures; but is of another nature, ſomething which tranſcends all that ever was felt or taſted in this world, ſince we were firſt converſant among ſenſible objects.

Secondly, A mighty ſtrength and power coming into their ſouls, and actuating all its faculties and graces. When God comes near, new powers enter the ſoul; the feeble is as David, Pſalm cxxxviii. 3. "In the day that I cried, thou anſweredſt "me, and ſtrengthenedſt me with ſtrength in my ſoul." Cant. i. 12. "Whilſt the king ſitteth at his table, my ſpikenard," *&c.* Hope was low, and faith was weak, little ſtrength in any grace, except deſires; but when the Lord comes, ſtrength comes with him. Then as it is, Neh. viii. 10. "The joy of "the Lord is your ſtrength." O the vigorous ſallies of the heart to God! Pſalm lxiii. 8. "O the ſtrength of love!" Cant. viii. 6. Duties are other manner of things than they were wont to be. "Did not our hearts burn within us?" Luke xxiv. 32.

Thirdly, A remarkable transformation and change of ſpirit follows it.

Theſe things are found to be marvellouſly aſſimilating. The ſights of God, the felt preſence of God, is as fire, which quickly aſſimilates what is put into it to its own likeneſs. So 2 Cor. iii. 18. They are ſaid to be "changed from glory to "glory." It always leaves the mind more refined and abſtracted from groſs material things, and changed into the ſame image. They have a ſimilitude of God upon them, who have God near unto their hearts and reins.

Fourthly, A vigorous working of the heart heaven-ward; a mounting of the ſoul upward. Now the ſoul ſhews that it hath not forgot its way home again. It is with ſuch a ſoul as ſenſibly embraces Chriſt in the arms of faith, as it with was Simeon, when he took him bodily into his arms. "Now (ſaith "he) let thy ſervant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen "thy ſalvation." O it would have the wings of a dove, to fly away from this polluted world, this unquiet world, and be at reſt.

Infer. 1. *Then certainly there is an heaven, and a ſtate of glory for the ſaints.* Heaven is no dream or night viſion: It is ſenſibly taſted and felt by thouſands of witneſſes in this world; they are ſure it is no miſtake. God is with them of a truth, in the way of their duties: They do not only read of a glorified eye, but they have ſomething of it, or like it in this world: "The pure in heart do here ſee God," Mat. v. 8. The ſaints have not only a witneſs without them in the word, that there is a ſtate of glory prepared for believers, but they have a witneſs in themſelves. Theſe are not the teſtimonies of crazed

brains, but of the wiſeſt and moſt ſerious of men; not a few, but a multitude of them; not conjecturally delivered, but upon taſte, feeling, and trial. O bleſſed be God for ſuch ſenſible confirmations, ſuch ſweet prelibations!

Infer. 2. But, oh! what is heaven? And what that ſtate of glory reſerved for the ſaints? Doth a glimpſe of God's preſence in a duty, go down to the heart and reins? O how unutterable then muſt that be which is ſeen and felt above, where God comes as near to men as can be! Rev. xxii. 3, 4. "The "throne of God and the Lamb ſhall be in it, and his ſervants "ſhall ſerve him; and they ſhall ſee his face." And 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. "And ſo we ſhall be ever with the Lord." O what is that! "Ever with the Lord?" Chriſtians, what you feel and taſte here by faith, is part of heaven's glory; but yet heaven will be an unſpeakable ſurprizal to you, when you come thither for all that: "It doth not yet appear what we ſhall be," 1 John iii. 1, 2.

Infer. 3. See hence the neceſſity of caſting theſe very bodies into a new mold by their reſurrection from the dead, according to that, 1 Cor. xv. 41. "It is ſown in weakneſs, but raiſed "in power." How elſe could it be a co-partner with the ſoul in the ineffable joys of that preſence above?

The ſtate of this mortality cannot bear the fulneſs of that joy. Hold, Lord, ſtay thy hand, ſaid a choice Chriſtian once, thy creature is but a clay-veſſel, and can hold no more. If a tranſient glimpſe of God here, be felt in the very reins, if it ſo work upon the very body by ſympathy with the ſoul, O what vigorous ſpiritual bodies, doth the ſtate of glory require! and ſuch ſhall they be; Phil. iii. 12. "Like unto Chriſt's glorious "body."

Infer. 4. Is God ſo near to his people above all others in the world? How good is it to be near them that are ſo near to God? O, it would do a man's heart good to be near that perſon who hath lately had God near to his ſoul! Well might David ſay, Pſalm xvi. 3. "All my delight is in the ſaints, and "in the excellent of the earth." And again, Pſalm cxix. 63. "I am a companion of all ſuch as fear thee." O this is the beauty of Chriſtian fellowſhip, this is the glory of that ſociety! not the communication of their gifts, but the favour of God on their ſpirits. If any thing be alluring in this world, this is; 1 John i. 3. "That ye may have fellowſhip with us; and truly "our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Chriſt "Jeſus." It is ſaid, Zech. viii. 23. of the Jews, the time ſhall come, when there ſhall be ſuch a preſence of God among that people, that "ten men out of all languages ſhall take hold of

"the skirt of him that is a Jew; saying, We will go with you, "for we have heard that God is with you."

Christians, if there were more of God upon you, and in you, others would not be tempted to leave your society, and fall in with the men of the world; they would say, we will go with you, for God is with you.

Infer. 5. If God be so near to the heart and reins of his people in their duties, O how assiduous should they be in their duties? "It is good for me to draw nigh to God," Psalm lxxiii. 28. Good indeed; the world cannot reward the expence of time at this rate, with all its glory; James iv. 8. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you: thou "meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness; those "that remember thee in thy ways," Isa. lxiv. 5.

Obj. It would be an encouragement indeed, if I might thus meet God in the way of duty; but that is but seldom I can so meet God there, in sensible powerful outlets of his grace and love! I am most dead and cold there: I feel not communion with God going down to my heart and reins.

Sol. First, You draw nigh to God; but is it in truth, or in mere formality? God is only nigh to such as call upon him in truth, Psalm cxlv. 18.

Secondly, If your hearts be sincere, yet are they not sluggish? Do you stir up yourselves to take hold of God? Many there be that do not; Isa. lxiv. 7. and Cant. v. 3, 5.

Thirdly, Have you not grieved the Spirit of God, and caused him to withdraw from you. O remember what pride and vanity hath been in you, after former manifestations; Ephes. iv. 30.

Fourthly, Nevertheless wait for God in his ways; his coming upon our souls is oftentimes, yea, mostly, a surprizal to us; Cant. vi. 12. "Or ever I was aware, my soul made me as the "chariots of Amminadib."

Infer. 6. What steady Christians should all real Christians be? For lo, what a seal and witness hath religion in the breast of every sincere professor of it? True Christians do not only hear by report, or learn by books, the reality of it; but feel by experience, and have a sensible proof of it in their very hearts and reins; their reins instruct them, as it is Psalm xvi. 7. They learn by spiritual sense and feeling, than which nothing can give greater confirmation in the ways of God.

There are two sorts of knowledge among men; one traditional, the other experimental: this last the apostle calls a "knowing in ourselves;" Heb. x. 34. and opposes it to that

traditional knowledge which may be said to be without ourselves, because borrowed from other men.

Now this experience we have of the power of religion in our souls, is that only which fixes a man's spirit in the ways of godliness. It made the Hebrews take joyfully the spoiling of their goods; no arguments or temptations can wrest truth out of the hand of experience, *Non est disputandum de gustu.* For want of this, many professors turn aside from truth in the hour of trial. O brethren! labour to feel the influences of religion upon your very hearts and reins! this will settle you better than all the arguments in the world can do; by this, the ways of God are more endeared to men, than by any other way in the world. When your hearts have once felt it, you will never forsake it.

THE THIRD MEDITATION, UPON

ROM. vii. 21. *I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

THIS chapter is the very anatomy of a Christian's heart, and gives an account of the most secret frames, and inward workings of it, both as to graces and corruptions: and this verse is a compendium of both; for the words are a mournful complaint, uttered with a deep sense of an inward pressure, by reason of sin; wherein we are to consider three things:

1. The person complaining.
2. The matter of complaint.
3. The discovery of that matter.

First, The person complaining: I find, I Paul, though I come not behind the chiefest of all the apostles, though I have been wrapt into the third heaven, and heard things unutterable; yet I, for all that, find in me a law. Never was any mere man more deeply sanctified; never any lived at an higher rate of communion with God; never any did Christ more service in this world; and yet he found a law of sin in himself.

Secondly, The matter of the complaint, which consists in a

double evil he groaned under; *viz.* 1. The presence of sin at all times. 2. The operation of sin, especially at some times.

First, The presence of sin at all times: *Evil* (saith he) *is present with me*, it follows me as my shadow doth. By evil we must understand no other evil but sin, the evil of evils; which, in respect of power and efficacy, he also calls a law; because as laws, by reason of their annexed rewards and punishments, have a mighty power and efficacy upon the minds of men; so sin, indwelling sin, that root of all our trouble and sorrow, hath a mighty efficacy upon us.

And this is the mournful matter of his complaint: it is not for outward afflictions, though he had many; nor for what he suffered from the hands of men, though he suffered many grievous things; but it is sin, dwelling and working in him, that swallows up all other troubles, as rivers are lost in the sea; this evil was always with him, the constant residence of sin was in his heart and nature.

Secondly, And what further adds to his burden, as it dwelt in him at all times, so it exerted its efficacy more especially at some times, and those the special times, and principal seasons in his whole life: when I would do good (saith he) any spiritual good, and among the rest, when I address myself to any spiritual duty, or heavenly employment; when I design to draw near to God, and promise myself comfort and redress in communion * with him, then is evil present. Oh! if I were but rid of it in those hours, what a mercy should I esteem it, though I were troubled with it at other times! Could I but enjoy my freedom from it in the seasons of duty, and times of communion with God, what a comfort would that be! But then is the special season of its operation: never is sin more active and busy, than at such a time; and this, O this is my misery and my burden!

Thirdly, The next thing to be heeded here, is the discovery of this evil to him, over which he so mourns and laments: I find then a law, saith he, I find it (*i. e.*) by inward sense, feeling, and sad experience. He knew there was such a thing as original sin in the nature of men, when he was an unregenerated Pharisee; but though he had then the notion of it, he had not the sense and feeling of it as now he had; he now feels what before he traditionally understood and talked of: I

* When I go about the best exercises of religion, I find within me the law of the flesh rising up, and withdrawing me from them. *Totellius.*

find a law, *q. d.* what or how others find, I know not: some may boast of their *gifts*, and some may talk more than becomes them of their graces; they may find excellencies in themselves, and admire themselves too much for them; but, for my part, "I find a law, that when I would do good, evil "is present." I am sure I find a bad heart in the best season, a proud, dead, wandring, hard heart; I find it wofully out of order, God knows, and this is my misery. Hence note,

Doct. *That the best Christians do sensibly feel, and sadly bewail the workings of their corruptions, and that in the very seasons and opportunities of their communion with God.*

Bring thy thoughts, reader, close to this point, and sadly ponder these three things in it:

First, In what special acts Christians use to feel the working of their corruption in the season of their communion.

Secondly, Why is it that corruption stirs and troubles them more at such a time than at others.

Thirdly, Upon what account this is so great a burden to every gracious heart.

First, As to the first of these, namely, the special actings of corruption in the seasons of communion, they are such as have a natural aptitude and design to destroy all communion betwixt God and the soul; Gal. v. 17. "The flesh lusteth a-"gainst the Spirit." It is contrary to the Spirit; and by reason of that contrariety, a poor Christian cannot do the things that he would.

How many times have some Christians lamented this upon their knees, with bleeding hearts and weeping *eyes*? Lord, I came hither to enjoy thee; I hoped for some light, strength, and refreshment in this duty: I promised myself a good hour; my heart began to warm and melt in duty; I was nigh to the expectation and desire of my soul; but the unbelief, deadness, and vanity of my heart hath separated betwixt me and my God, and with-held good things from me.

Three things are requisite to communion with God in duties:

First, Composedness of thoughts.

Secondly, Activity of faith.

Thirdly, Excitation of affections: and all these are sensibly obstructed by innate corruption; for by in-dwelling sin,

First, The order of the soul is disturbed by sending forth multitudes of vain and impertinent thoughts, to infest and distract the soul in its approaches to God: the sense of this evil gave occasion to that prayer, Psal. lxxvi. 11. "Unite my

"heart to fear thy name." How much have we to do with our own hearts upon this account every day? Abundance of rules are given to cure this evil, but the corruption of the heart makes them all neceſſary.

Secondly, The activity of faith is clogged by natural unbelief: O what difficulties is every work of faith carried through! "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief," Mark ix. 24. It cramps the hand of faith in every part of its work; the ſoul ſenſibly feels itſelf bound and fettered by its own unbelief, ſo that it cannot aſſent with that fulneſs, clearneſs, and determinateneſs that it would; it cannot apply with that ſtrength, certainty, and comfort it deſires; and thus are the wings of faith pinioned, that when we ſhould ſoar aloft in the higheſt acts of ſweet communion with God, we can but flutter upon the earth, and make ſome weak eſſays and offers heaven-ward, which oftentimes are fruſtrated and put by, through the unbelief that is in us.

Thirdly, The excitation of the affections is rendered difficult, by reaſon of that natrual deadneſs and hardneſs that is in the heart. Alas, it is naturally an heart of ſtone, and as eaſy it is to diſſolve or melt the rocks into a ſweet ſyrup, as the heart into ſpiritual and heavenly affections towards God. There is ſcarce any one thing in the world that Chriſtians more paſſionately bewail, and are more ſenſibly afflicted for, than the deadneſs and hardneſs of their own hearts. Nothing is found ſufficient ſometimes to affect and raiſe them; and yet if they be not excited out of their torpor and ſtupidity, they cannot have communion with God in duties.

Secondly, And if we enquire into the reaſons why poor Chriſtians find themſelves more infeſted by natural corruptions in the ſeaſons of duty than at other times; the reaſons are obvious to him that conſiders, 1. That duty irritates it; 2. Satan excites it; 3. God permits it to be ſo.

Firſt, Corruption is irritated by duty, it is provoked by that which bridles and purges it: Nothing is found more deſtructive to ſin than communion with God is; and therefore nothing makes a fiercer oppoſition to all fellowſhip and communion betwixt the ſoul and its God than ſin doth. As waters ſwell and rage when they are obſtructed by a dam, ſo do our corruptions when obſtructed and checked by duty. Sin would fain make men leave praying, and prayer would fain make men leave ſinning.

Secondly, As duty irritates it, ſo Satan excites it, eſpecially

in such seasons. When Joshua the high priest stood before the Lord, Satan was seen standing at his right hand to resist him, Zech. iii. 1. How hard is it for a Christian then to be dextrous, apt, and ready for spiritual works, whilst Satan stands at his right hand, the working hand, to make resistance.

The devil is aware that one hour of close, spiritual, and hearty converse with God in prayer, is able to pull down what he hath been contriving and building many a year. Now this envious spirit having an easy access to the fancy, that busy and unruly power of the soul, will not be wanting to create such figments and notions in it, as, like a rapid stream, shall carry away the soul and all its thoughts from God in duty. O what ado have most Christians to prevent the sallies and excursions of their hearts from God at such times!

3. As Satan exercises it, so the wise and holy God, for good ends to his people, permits it to be so.

This thorn in the flesh keeps them humble; these lamented distractions and corruptions in their duties destroy their dependance upon them, and glorying in them: For if we be so prone to pride and confidence in our duties, amidst such sensible workings and minglings of corruption with them, what would we be if they were more pure and excellent? These things also make the saints weary of this world, and to groan within themselves after the more perfect state wherein God shall be enjoyed and seen in more perfection and satisfaction. But,

Thirdly, This in the mean time cannot but be a very grievous affliction and pressure to the gracious soul, to be thus clogged and infested by its own corruptions in the very season of its communion with God. For,

First, By this the soul is rendered very unsuitable to that holy presence it approaches; Hab. i. 13. "Thou art of purer "eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity." Must the great and blessed God wait upon a poor worm till it be at leisure to attend him? Must he be forsaken for every trifle that comes in the way of its fancy? Oh, how provoking an evil is this! "Surely God heareth not vainty, neither will "the Almighty regard it," Job xxxv. 13. This unsuitableness of our spirits to the Lord, cannot do less than cover our faces with shame; as it did Ezra; chap. ix. 6. "O my God, I am "ashamed, and even blush to look up unto thee."

Secondly, By this those benefits and comforts are intercepted which are better than life; there is a sensible presence of God; there are manifestations of pardon, peace and love;

there are reviving influences and freſh anointings of the Spirit; there are a thouſand mercies of this kind, that in their ſeaſons are communicated to men in the way of duty; and would it not grieve a man to the very heart and ſoul, to be defeated of thoſe ineſtimable treaſures, by the breaking forth of the unbelief, pride, or vanity of his own heart, when ſuch mercies are almoſt in his hand? "Your iniquities, (ſaith the prophet) have ſeparated betwixt you and your God; and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear," Iſa. lix. 2. O cruel covering! O diſmal cloud! that hides the face of God from his people, that they cannot behold it! "Wherefore "am I come from Geſhur (ſaith Abſalom) if I may not ſee "the king's face?"

What do I here upon my knees, ſaith a Chriſtian, if I may not ſee God? Duties are nothing to me without God; the world and all its comforts are dry and taſteleſs things to me without God; his manifeſted favour and ſealed love are the very life of my life, and from this the corruptions of my own heart have cut me off.

Thirdly, By theſe things the beauty and excellency of duties are defaced. Theſe dead flies ſpoil that excellent ointment; for wherein conſiſts the beauty and true excellency of duties, but in that ſpirituality and heavenly temper of ſoul with which they are performed? This makes them ſuitable to their object, John iv. 24. Take away ſpirituality from duties, and then you may number them among your ſins, and the matters of your ſhame and ſorrow. Take away the heart from duty, and what remains but a dead carcaſs without life or beauty?

Fourthly, By theſe things gracious ſouls are greatly puzzled and perplexed about their eſtate and condition; this is the fountain of their fears and doubtings. Oh! when a man feels ſuch deadneſs in his heart towards God, ſuch ſtiffneſs in his will to the will of God, ſuch a liſtleſs careleſs temper to all that is ſpiritual, how (thinks he) can this conſiſt with a renewed ſtate and temper? Sure no Chriſtian is troubled with ſuch an heart as mine is, eſpecially when it ſhall be found in its ordinary courſe, ſo free, nimble and indefatigable in its purſuits and entertainments of things ſenſual and earthly: there it is as the chariots of Amminadib, but here, like Pharaoh's chariots: there it as much needs the curb, as it doth the ſpur here. *Lord*, ſaith the poor ſoul, *I know not what to do; if I do not look into my heart, I cannot be ſincere; and if I do, I can have no comfort.* This is a ſad perplexity indeed!

Fifthly, and laſtly, By theſe things the Spirit of God is grieved; and that which grieves him cannot but be a grief and burden to us: his motions are quenched by theſe corruptions, his ſanctifying deſigns (as much as lies in us) obſtructed by them; ſurely then there is cauſe enough why a Chriſtian ſhould follow every vain thought with a deep ſigh, and every ſtirring of unbelief with a ſad tear.

The uſefulneſs of this point is great and exceeding ſeaſonable, when we are to draw nigh to God, and addreſs ourſelves to ſpiritual duties; it may to great purpoſe be improved by way,

1. Of information.
2. Direction.
3. Conſolation.

We may greatly improve it for our information, in the following particulars.

1. Hence we may take our meaſures of the wonderful and aſtoniſhing grace and condeſcenſion of God to his people, who, notwithſtanding all that evil which is preſent with them in the good they do, will not reject their perſons or duties for all that.

How doth free grace make its own way through ſwarms of vanity! How doth it break through all the deadneſs, infidelity, and hardneſs of our hearts to do us good? Though evil be preſent with us, our gracious God will not be abſent from us notwithſtanding that.

How greatly was the ſpouſe amazed at the unexpected condeſcenſion and grace of Chriſt in this matter? Cant. ii. 8. "It "is the voice of my beloved; behold, he cometh leaping over "the mountains, ſkipping over the hills." *It is the voice of my beloved.* That abrupt broken expreſſion ſhews a perfect ſurprize: ſhe ſaw mountains of guilt and unworthineſs betwixt Chriſt and her ſoul; and yet, behold, he comes ſkipping over all thoſe mountains and hills: O free grace, rich and admirable grace, which with ſo many notwithſtandings and nevertheleſſes, will ſave and comfort the poor unworthy ſoul!

How little reaſon have any of us to be proud of our beſt performances! "There is not a juſt man upon earth, that doth "good, and ſinneth not," ſaith Solomon, Eccleſ. vii. 20. If there be ſomething ſupernaturally good in our duties, yet there is abundance of natural evil commixed with that good; the evil is wholly ours, the good wholly God's; we have no reaſon then to glory in our beſt performances.

It hath been a queſtion with ſome, Whether ſome ſhort

transient act of a regenerate soul may not be free from sin; but it was never questioned, whether any continued act, much less a course of actions, could be without sin. Evil will be present with us in all we do; it will be with us in our closets; present even in the awful presence of the holy God, in the most high and solemn duties of religion, in the most pure and spiritual actions that pass from us; cease then, as from dependance, so from pride and conceitedness in all you do. Whilst our natures are sanctified but in part, and our principles mixt, our duties and performances can never be pure. "Who can bring a "clean thing out of an unclean? not one," Job xiv. 4.

3. How are we all obliged to bless God for Jesus the Mediator, to make us and our sinful duties acceptable to God? Sad were our case if this high priest did not "bear the iniquity of "our holy things," as it is, Exod. xxviii. 38. It is his oblation and intercession that obtains and continues our pardon for our prayer-sins, our hearing-sins, our sacrament-sins; these alone would eternally damn us, if we had no other, did not free-grace "make us accepted in the Beloved," Eph. i. 6. When evil is present with us, then is Christ, our Advocate, present with the Father for us; and thence it is that we are not destroyed upon our knees, and that the jealousy of God breaks not forth as fire, to devour us in our very duties.

4. If evil be present with us, yea, inherent in us, in our best duties, what need had Christians then to watch against the external occasions of sin, and to keep a close guard upon their senses, especially when they have to do with God?

There is danger enough from within; you need not open another door from without. This natural corruption is too active in itself, if there be no irritation by any external occasion; how much more when the eye and ear are opened and unguarded, and occasions are offered it from without. Watching is half the work of a Christian, whilst he is praying, Eph. vi. 18. The Arabian proverb is as instructive as it is mystical, *Shut the windows, that the house may be light.*

5. If evil be present when we would do good, if it infest us in our best duties, then certainly there is no rest to be expected for any of God's people in this world. Where shall we go to be free from sin? If any where, let us go to our closets, to our knees, to the ordinances of God; yea, but even there evil is, and will be present with us; if we cannot be free from evil there, it is in vain to expect it elsewhere in this world. Only in heaven believers rest from sin. When once they are absent from the body, and present with the Lord, sin shall no

more be preſent with them; which ſhould make all that hate ſin, long for heaven, and be "willing to be diſſolved and be "with Chriſt."

2. For *direction*. Let all that experimentally ſee and feel what the apoſtle here mourns over, carefully attend ſuch directions as may prevent the ſpoil of their duties by the working of their corruptions in them.

Though no rules are found ſufficient to prevent wholly the influence of our corruptions upon duties, yet own it as a ſpecial mercy, if it may in any meaſure be prevented or reſtrained: In order whereunto I ſhall hint briefly theſe following rules, which the experience of many Chriſtians hath recommended, as exceeding uſeful in this caſe.

Rule 1. *Be more diligent in preparation for your duties, if you would meet with leſs interruption in your duties.* The very light of nature teaches ſolemn preparation to all important and weighty buſineſs: And is there more ſolemn and concerning buſineſs in all the world, than that which thou tranſacteſt with God in duties? Angels approach not this God with whom thou haſt to do, without profound reſpects to his immenſe greatneſs and awful holineſs, Iſa. vi. 3. When you ſtretch forth your hands, it is required that you firſt prepare your hearts, Job xi. 13, 14.

Rule 2. *Realize the preſence of God in all your duties; and awe your hearts all that you are able by that conſideration.* O think what a piercing holy eye beholds thy heart, and tries thy reins! Wouldeſt thou not be really aſhamed, if thy thoughts were but vocal to men, and the workings and wanderings of thy heart viſible to thoſe that join with thee in the ſame duty? O, if the preſence of God were more realized, certainly your hearts would be better ſecured againſt the incurſions of your corruptions.

Rule 3. *Labour for a deeper meaſure and degree of ſanctification;* many other rules are but ſpiritual anodynes to give preſent eaſe, but this is the way to a real cure. A thouſand things may be found helpful to put by a vain thought for the preſent, but then it returns again, and it may be with more ſtrength: This is the proper method to dry the ſpring, when others are but attempts to divert the ſtream: If habits of grace were more deeply radicated, acts of grace would be more eaſy to us, and flow more freely from us.

Rule 4. Laſtly, *Conſider what an aggravation it is to your evil, to vent itſelf in the ſpecial preſence of God in duties.* See who Paul mourns over it in the text: It is not only a ſin, but

an affronting of God to his face: This grieving of his Spirit is the ſpoil of thy duty; it is (as one aptly calls it) *obex infernalis*, an helliſh bar or *remora* to all ſweet and free intercourſe of the ſoul with God.

3. For *Conſolation*. But whilſt I am repreſenting the evil of it to ſome, it may be there are others overwhelmed with the ſorrowful ſenſe of it, even to diſcouragement and deſpondency: Poor Chriſtian! is this thy caſe? Are all the afflictions in the world nothing to thee, in compariſon with this evil which is preſent with thee, when thou wouldeſt do good? Well, though thou canſt not do the good thou wouldſt, nor free thyſelf yet from the evil thou wouldſt, rather than live, be freed from, there are four things that may give much relief to thy penſive ſoul.

1. *Though the preſence of evil, even in thy beſt duties, be ſad, yet thy grief and afflictions for it is ſweet*: That is a ſad ſin, but this is a ſweet ſign. It is not heart-evils, heart-wandering in duties, hardneſs and unbelief, that hypocrites mourn for, but more groſs and external evils. Let this trouble for ſin comfort thee when the preſence of ſin grieves thee.

2. *God accepts, through Jeſus Chriſt, what you do ſincerely, though you can do nothing purely and perfectly*, Cant. v. 1. Your ſincerity is your evangelical perfection; the evil that is preſent is not imputed; the good that is preſent is (notwithſtanding that commixed evil) accepted, which is ſtrong conſolation.

3. *You find your caſe was the caſe of bleſſed Paul, a man of eminent ſanctity*. And if you conſult all the ſaints, one by one, you will find them all ſick of this diſeaſe; ſo that your caſe is not ſingular.

4. *Your juſtification is perfect, and without ſpot, though your ſanctification be not ſo*; and the time is coming, when your ſanctification ſhall be as your juſtification is, and after that no more complaints.

THE FOURTH MEDITATION, UPON

EPH. i. 13. *In whom alſo, after that ye believed, ye were ſealed with the holy Spirit of promiſe.*

FROM his doxology and ſolemn thankſgiving, ver. 3. the apoſtle enumerates the principal Chriſtian privileges

that gave the occaſion of that thankſgiving, among which this in the text is not the leaſt, though laſt named.

In this one verſe we have the two noble acts of faith diſplayed; its direct act, called truſting; and its reflex act, which in order of nature and time follows it, and is implied in the word ſealing.

In the latter clauſe (to which I ſhall confine my meditations) four things muſt be remarked; *viz.* 1. The ſubject; 2. Nature; 3. Author; And 4. Quality of aſſurance.

1. The ſubject of aſſurance, which is, and can be no other than a ſoul that hath cloſed with Chriſt by faith: Reflex acts neceſſarily preſuppoſe direct ones. Never was any unbeliever ſealed, except to damnation: Aſſurance is peculiarly the prerogative of believers.

2. The nature of aſſurance: He calls it ſealing; an apt metaphor to expreſs the nature of it; for aſſurance, like a ſeal, both confirms, declares, and diſtinguiſhes it; it confirms the grant of God, declares the purpoſe of God, and diſtinguiſhes the perſon ſo privileged from other men.

3. The Author of aſſurance, which is the Spirit, he is the keeper of the great ſeal of heaven; and it is his office to confirm and ſeal the believer's right and intereſt in Chriſt and heaven, Rom. viii. 16.

4. Laſtly, The quality of this Spirit of aſſurance, or the ſealing Spirit: He ſeals in the quality of an holy Spirit, and of the Spirit of promiſe; as an holy Spirit, relating to his previous ſanctifying work upon the ſealed ſoul; as the Spirit of promiſe, reſpecting the *medium* or inſtrument made uſe of by him in his ſealing work; for he ſeals by opening and applying the promiſes to believers from the Spirit's order. The note will be this:

Doct. *That the privilege of ſealing follows the duty of believing.*

There is no ſeaſon more proper to treat of the ſealing of the Spirit, than at a ſealing ordinance: Nor can I handle the Spirit's ſealing-work in a more profitable method, than in ſatisfying theſe five queries particularly, and then applying the whole.

1. What is the Spirit's ſealing-work, and how performed?
2. Why none are ſealed till they believe?
3. Whether all believers are ſealed?
4. What is the privilege of being ſealed?
5. What are the effects of the Spirit's ſealing?

1. *Query.* What is the Spirit's ſealing-work? and how is it performed.

fifthly. The sealing of the Spirit is, his giving a sure and certain testimony to the reality of that work of grace he hath wrought in our souls, and to our interest in Christ and the promises, thereby satisfying our fears and doubts about our estate and condition.

Every matter of weight and concernment is to be proved by two sufficient witnesses, Deut. xix. 15. Our sincerity and interest in Christ are matters of the deepest concernment to us in all the world, and therefore need a farther witness to confirm and clear them than that of our own spirits, Rom. viii. 16. Three things concur to the Spirit's sealing-work.

He sanctifies the soul; he irradiates and clears that work of sanctification; he enables it thereby to apply promises.

The first is his material or objective seal; the latter his formal sealing. None but the Spirit of God can clear and confirm our title to Christ, for he only searcheth the deep things of God, 1 Cor. ii. 10. and it is his office, Rom. viii. 16. συμμαρτυρεῖ, to witness with our spirits.

This seal or witness of the Spirit must needs be true and certain, because omniscience and truth are his essential properties. He is omniscient, 1 Cor. ii. 10. and therefore cannot be deceived himself. He is the Spirit of truth, John xiv. 17. and therefore cannot deceive us; so that his testimony is more infallible and satisfactory than a voice from heaven, 2 Pet. i. 19.

If an angel should appear, and tell us, Christ hath said to him, Go and tell such a man, that I love him, that I shed my blood for him, and will save him, it could never give that repose and satisfaction to the mind, as the internal witness or seal of the Spirit doth; for that may be a delusion, but this cannot. The witness of our own heart may amount to a strong probability, but the witness of the Spirit is demonstration, 1 John iv. 24.

So, that as it is the design and work of Satan, to cast in doubts and fears into gracious hearts, to perplex and entangle them, so, oppositely, it is the work of the Spirit to clear and settle the sanctified soul, and fill it with peace and joy in believing, John xvi. 7. Rom. xiv. 17.

In sealing, he both attests the *fidem quæ creditur*, the doctrine or object of faith, and the *fidem qua creditur*, the infused habit or grace of faith: of the former he saith, This is my word; of the latter, This is my work; and his seal or testimony is evermore agreeable to the written word, Isa. viii. 20. So that what he speaks in our hearts, and what he saith in the scripture, are evermore concordant and harmonious testimonies.

To conclude: In ſealing the believer he doth not make uſe of an audible voice, nor the miniſtry of angels, nor immediate and extraordinary revelations, but he makes uſe of his own graces implanted in our hearts, and his own promiſes written in the ſcriptures; and in this method he uſually brings the doubting trembling heart of a believer to reſt and comfort.

2. *Query.* Why are none ſealed till after believing?

Anſw. It cannot be denied, but that many perſons in a ſtate of nature and unbelief, may have ungrounded confidences, and falſe comforts built thereupon. This is evident from Matth. vii. 22. "Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, "Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name?" And John viii. 54, 55. "Of whom ye ſay that he is your God, and yet "ye have not known him." And, beyond all, is that ſtartling ſcripture, Heb. iv. 4, 5. "Who were once enlightened, "and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers "of the holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good word of God, "and the powers of the world to come, if they fall away," *&c.*

But for any, except real believers, to have thoſe witneſſes and ſealings of the Spirit deſcribed above, is utterly impoſſible, and will evidently appear to be ſo, whether we conſider the author, nature, object, mediums, end and deſign of this work.

Firſt, Conſider the author of this work, the *Spirit of God*, who is an holy Spirit, as the text calls him, and the *Spirit of truth*, as Chriſt calls him, John xiv. 17. and it cannot be that ever he ſhould give teſtimony to a lie, or give a falſe witneſs, quite croſs to the very tenour of the written word, as he muſt do, ſhould he ſeal an unbeliever. What though they be elect? yet, whilſt unregenerate, they have no actual intereſt in Chriſt and the promiſes, and therefore can have none ſealed by the Spirit. *Prius eſt prædicare de eſſe quam de cognoſci;* we muſt be ſaints before we can be known to be ſo.

Secondly, Conſider but the nature of this work, and it cannot be that ever an unbeliever ſhould be ſealed by the Spirit; for aſſurance is produced in our ſouls by the reflexive acts of our faith: the Spirit helps us to reflect upon what hath been done by him formerly upon our hearts; "hereby we know that "we know him," 1 John ii. 3. To know that we know, is a reflex act; now it is impoſſible there ſhould be a reflex before there hath been a direct act: no man can have the evidence of his faith, before the habit be infuſed, and the vital act firſt performed.

Thirdly, Conſider the object-matter, to which he ſeals, and will be found to be his own ſanctifying operations upon our

hearts, and consequently to our privileges in Christ, Rom. viii. 16. 1 John iii. 24. The thing or matter attested is, that Christ abideth in us, and that we are the children of God; but no such thing can be sealed till we believe, for neither our adoption nor sanctification can be before faith.

Fourthly, Consider the mediums or instruments used by the Spirit in his sealing-work: the promises are his sealing instruments, and on that account he is called *the Spirit of promise* in the text; not only because he is the Spirit promised, but as the promises contain the Spirit, so the Spirit uses the promises, (*i. e.*) clears them to our understandings, and helps us to apply them to our souls. But this he never doth, nor can do, till the soul, by faith, have union with Christ; for till then, it hath no right in the promises.

Fifthly, and lastly, Consider the end and design of this work of the Spirit, which is to secure to the soul its peace, pardon, and salvation in Christ, he seals believers to the day of redemption, Eph. iv. 30. (*i. e.*) to their complete salvation; so then it must be equally impossible for an unbeliever to be sealed as to be saved.

3. *Query*. The next enquiry is, Whether all believers are sealed by the Spirit?

Answ. The resolution of this query will depend upon several distinctions that must be made upon this matter.

Distinction 1. We must distinguish the different kinds of the Spirit's sealing; all his sealing-work is not of one kind, nor to one and the same use and end.

There is an objective seal, which distinguishes the person; and a formal seal, which clears and ratifies his interest in Christ and salvation: the first he doth in sanctifying us, the second in assuring us.

When he seals objectively, that is, when he sanctifies us really by the infusion of grace, he seals us by way of distinction from other men, which is one end of sealing; for though, in respect of God's decree and purpose, there was a difference betwixt us and others before time, 2 Tim. ii. 19. and although in regard of Christ's intention in his death, there was a difference betwixt us and others, John xvii. 9. yet all this while there is no personal actual difference betwixt us and others, till sanctification do make one, Eph. ii. 3. and 1 Cor. vi. 11. But the sanctification of the Spirit makes a real difference in the state and temper of the person, 2 Cor. v. 17. and manifests that difference which election put betwixt us and others before

time, 1 Theſſ. i. 4, 5. And yet all this while a man may not be formally ſealed, *i. e.* his ſanctification may be very doubtful to himſelf, and he may labour under great fears about it.

Diſtinction 2. The ſeaſons of the Spirit's ſealing muſt be diſtinguiſhed; and theſe are to ſome,

1*ſt*, Immediately upon the ſoul's firſt cloſing with Chriſt at converſion, eſpecially when converſion is wrought at a riper age, and is uſhered in by a greater degree of the Spirit of bondage, and deep inward terrors. Thus the Prodigal (the emblem of a convert ſo brought home to God) was entertained with the fatted calf and muſic; but all find not this preſently, as ſome do.

2*dly*, Times of eminent communion with God are ſealing times. There are extraordinary out-lets of peace, joy, and comfort, at ſome ſeaſons, in duty, which makes the ſtate of the ſoul very clear, and baniſhes all ſcruples and fears from the heart.

3*dly*, Others are ſealed upon ſome eminent hazard they have been expoſed to for Chriſt, or ſome extraordinary ſufferings they have undergone for Chriſt, wherein they have carried it with eminent meekneſs, patience, and ſelf-denial, 2 Cor. i. 4, 5. Thus the martyrs were many times ſealed in the depth of their ſufferings.

4*thly*, It is uſually found that a ſealing-time follows a dark day of deſertion, and ſore combats with temptations; *poſt nubila phoebus*. So that text, Rev. ii. 17. is expounded by ſome, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden "manna, and will give him a white ſtone, and in the ſtone a "new name written."

5*thly*, Dying-times prove ſealing-times to many ſouls, if their whole life hath been like that day deſcribed by the prophet, Zech. xiv. 17. Neither dark nor light, a life betwixt hopes and fears, yet at evening-time it hath been light.

Diſtinction 3. *Laſtly*, We muſt diſtinguiſh theſe ſeveral ways and manners of ſealing: Some are extraordinary and immediate, vouchſafed only to ſome perſons, at ſome ſpecial times and ſeaſons. Thus Zaccheus was in an extraordinary and immediate way aſcertained of his ſalvation; Luke xix. 9. "This day is ſalvation come to this houſe." And ſo the palſy-man; Mark ii. 5. "Son, (ſaith Chriſt) thy ſins be forgiven "thee." But theſe immediate ways are ceaſed; no man may now expect by any new revelation or ſign from heaven, by any voice or extraordinary inſpiration, to have his ſalvation ſealed, but muſt expect that mercy in God's ordinary way and

method, searching the scriptures, examining our own hearts, and waiting on the Lord in prayer.

The learned Gerson gives an instance of one that had been long upon the borders of despair, and at last sweetly assured and settled; and being asked how he attained that assurance, he answered, *non ex nova aliqua revelatione, &c.* Not by any new revelation, but by subjecting my understanding to, and comparing my heart with the written word.

And Mr. Roberts, in his treatise of the covenants, speaks of another that so vehemently panted after the sealings and assurance of the love of God to his soul, that for a long time he earnestly desired some voice from heaven; and sometimes walking in the solitary fields, earnestly desired some miraculous voice from the trees or stones there: This was denied him, but in time a better was afforded, in a scriptural way.

Now to resolve the query out of these distinctions.

First, Though all believers have not the formal sealings of the Spirit, yet they have the objective or material seal; that is, the Spirit is in them as a sanctifying Spirit, putting a real difference betwixt them and others, when he is not with them by way of evidence and assurance of sanctification.

Secondly, Though all believers are not sealed at one and the same time, yet there are few, if any believers, but do meet with one season or other in this life, wherein the Lord doth seal them; if not at their first close with Christ, as many have been sealed, yet in some choice and eminent season of communion with God: Such golden spots of time, such precious seasons most Christians can speak of; though, as Bernard speaks, it be *rara hora, brevis mora*, seldom, but sweet: Or if not in the course of their active obedience, it is a thousand to one but they shall meet it in the way of their passive obedience, if God exercise them eminently under the cross, or after a dark cloud of desertion, or in a dying hour.

Thirdly, and *lastly*, though God now seals not men in an extraordinary and immediate way, by revelation, immediate inspiration, or voices from heaven, yet most Christians are sealed in the ordinary way of the Spirit, under one ordinance or other, in one duty or other.

4. Query. *What is the privilege of being sealed by the Spirit?*

Answ. Much every way; words cannot express the riches of this mercy: For let us but consider the four following particulars, and you will admire the mercy.

First, Consider whose act and proper work sealing is. God doth not send angels upon this errand; though, if he did, that

would be a great honour to poor duſt and aſhes, but he ſends his Spirit to do it. O the condeſcenſion of the great God to men! This is a greater honour than if millions of angels were employed about it.

And then, as to the certainty and ſatisfaction, it is beyond all other ways and methods in the world; for in miraculous voices and inſpirations it is poſſible there may, *ſubeſſe falſum*, be found ſome cheats or impoſture of the devil; but the Spirit's witneſs in the heart, ſuitable to his revelation in the ſcripture, cannot deceive us.

Secondly, The concluſion or truth ſealed is raviſhing and tranſporting. All Chriſtians vehemently pant for it, few have the enjoyment of it for any long continuance; but whilſt they do enjoy it, they enjoy heaven upon earth, a joy beyond all the joys of this world. To have this concluſion ſurely ſealed, Chriſt is mine, my ſin is pardoned, I ſhall be ſaved from wrath through him; O what is this! what is this!

Thirdly, Conſider the ſubject or perſon ſealed, a poor ſinful wretch, that has, ten thouſand times over, grieved the good Spirit of God, by whom, notwithſtanding, thou art ſealed to the day of redemption: Thou haſt by every ſin deſerved to be ſealed up to damnation: Thou haſt reaſon to account and eſteem thyſelf much inferior in graces and duties to many thouſands of the ſaints that are panting after this privilege, and cannot obtain it: O the riches of the goodneſs of God!

Fourthly, and *laſtly*, Conſider the deſigns and aims of the Spirit in his ſealing thy ſoul, which are,

1. To ſecure heaven to thee for ever.

2. As intermediate thereunto, to bring very much of heaven into thy ſoul, in the way to it; indeed to give thee two heavens, whilſt many others muſt ſuffer two hells.

5. Query. *Laſtly*, we will enquire, *What are the effects of the Spirit's ſealing upon our ſouls, by which we may diſtinguiſh and clearly diſcern it from all deluſions of Satan, and all impoſtures whatſoever.*

Anſw. The genuine and proper effects and fruits of ſealing are, 1. Inflamed love. 2. Renewed care. 3. Deep abaſements. 4. Increaſe of ſtrength. 5. A deſire to be with the Lord. 6. Improved mortification to the world.

Whereſoever theſe are found conſequent to our communion with God, and his manifeſtations of himſelf to us therein, they put it beyond all doubt that it was the ſeal of his own bleſſed Spirit, and no deluſion.

1. The ſealings of the Spirit cannot but inflame the love

of the ſoul in a very intenſe degree towards God; one flame doth no more naturally beget another, than the love of God doth kindle the love of a gracious ſoul to him: "We have "known and believed the love that God hath to us," 1 John iv. 16, 19. When Chriſt had forgiven much to that poor woman that had ſinned much, and manifeſted pardoning mercy to her ſoul; O how much was her love to Chriſt inflamed thereby! Luke vii. 47.

2. Renewed care and diligence follows the ſealings of the Spirit: Now is the ſoul at the foot of Chriſt, as Mary was at the ſepulchre, with fear and great joy. He that travels the road with a rich treaſure about him, is afraid of a thief in every buſh. This is exemplified in the ſpouſe, who had endured many a ſad day and night in Chriſt's abſence, and ſought him ſorrowing: But when ſhe had regained his felt and ſenſible preſence, it is ſaid, Cant. iii. 4. "I found him whom my ſoul loveth; "I held him, and would not let him go."

She doth not (as Mr. Durham ſpeaks) lay by diligence, as if all were done; but is of-new taken up with as great care to retain and improve this mercy, as before ſhe was ſollicitous to obtain it. Whether a believer want or have, whether he be ſeeking or enjoying, there is ſtill matter of exerciſe for him in his condition.

3. Deep abaſements, and great humblings, uſe to follow the eminent appearances of God to the ſouls of men. "Lord, "(ſaid that diſciple) how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thyſelf to "us, and not unto the world?" John xiv. 22. When God ſealed the covenant to Abraham, to be a God to him, at this Abraham fell upon his face, Gen. xvii. 1, 2, 3. Never doth a ſoul lie lower in the duſt, and abhor itſelf, than when the Lord makes the moſt ſignal manifeſtations of his grace and love to it.

4. Increaſed ſtrength follows the ſealings of the Spirit. New powers enter into the ſoul, and a ſenſible improvement of its abilities for duty: "Or ever I was aware (ſaith the ſpouſe) "my ſoul made me as the chariots of Amminadib," Cant vi. 12.

Now the wheels of the ſoul being oiled with the joy and comfort of the Spirit, run nimbly in the ways of obedience. The joy of the Lord is your ſtrength.

5. Sealings of the Spirit inflame the deſires of the ſoul after heaven, and make it long to go home. Nothing makes death ſo undeſirable to the ſaints, as the doubts and fears that hang upon their ſpirits, about their condition. Were their evidences for heaven clear, and their doubts reſolved, they would, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, "deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with

" Chriſt," Phil. i. 23. If once the great queſtion of our intereſt in Chriſt be thoroughly decided, and all be clear betwixt us and our God, we ſhall find life the matter of patience, and death the object of deſire.

Sixthly, and *laſtly*, Improved mortification to the world, flows naturally from the ſealings and aſſurances of the love of God to our ſouls. It is with our ſouls, after ſuch a view of heaven, and a ſealing intereſt therein, as it is with him that hath been gazing upon that glorious creature the ſun, when he comes to caſt his eyes again upon the earth, all things ſeem dark and cloudy to him; he ſees no beauty in any of thoſe things, becauſe of that excellent luſtre which he lately beheld. " We know (ſaith the apoſtle) that if our earthly houſe of " this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God; " an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens:" There is aſſurance or ſealing. " For in this we grone earneſtly; " deſiring to be cloathed upon with our houſe which is from " heaven:" There is the natural effect of it, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2.

Uſes. The point ſpeaks to three ſorts of perſons, *viz*. 1. To thoſe that have not yet been ſealed. 2. To thoſe that once had, but now want, this comfort. 3. To thoſe that enjoy the comforts of it.

Firſt, To thoſe that yet want this mercy, who have not been formerly ſealed by any aſſurance of their title to Chriſt, but all their days have been clogged with fears, and doubt of their condition. To ſuch my counſel is,

1. That you be not quiet under theſe uncertainties, but pant after the aſſurance of peace and pardon. Say unto Chriſt, as the ſpouſe did, Cant. viii. 6. " Set me as a ſeal upon thy " heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm:" Pant after it, as David did, Pſalm xxxv. 3. " Say unto my ſoul, I am thy ſalvation."

How can you look upon ſuch precious promiſes, and not dare to taſte them? How can you hear others ſpeak of their ſatisfaction, peace, and aſſurance, and be quiet until you have alſo attained it? What is it that hinders this mercy, that it cannot come home to your ſouls? Is it your neglect of duty? O ſtir up yourſelves to take hold of God! Is it want of a thorough ſearch and examination of your ſtate? O let not thine eyes find reſt, till that be fully done. Is it ſome ſpecial guilt upon thy ſoul, that grieves the Spirit of God? Be reſtleſs till it be removed. I know this mercy is not at your command, do what you can do; but yet I alſo know, when God beſtows it, he uſually doth it in theſe ways of our duty.

Secondly, To thoſe that once had, but now want this bleſſing,

who say as Job xxix. 2, 3. "O that it were with me as "in days past!" The darkness is the greater to you, because you have walked in the light of the Lord. The sum of Christ's counsel in this case is given in three words; Rev. ii. 5. *Remember, repent, reform.*

First, Remember, i. e. Ponder, consider, compare time with time, and state with state, how well it once was, how sad it is now.

Secondly, Repent; mourn over these your sinful relapses; sure you may challenge the first place among all the mourners in the world. Your loss is great. O better to have lost the light of your eyes, than this sweet light of God's countenance. Your sin hath separated betwixt you and your God. O mourn over it.

Thirdly, Reform; Do your first works again. O Christian, consider thy heart is sunk deeper into the world than it was wont to be; thy duties are fewer, and thy zeal and affection to God much abated. Return, return, O backsliding soul, and labour to recover thy first love to Christ whatever pains it cost thee.

Lastly, To those that do enjoy these choice and invaluable mercies, the sealings of the Spirit.

First, Take heed that you grieve not the good Spirit of God, "by whom ye are sealed to the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30. He hath comforted you; do not you grieve him: The Spirit is a tender delicate thing you may quickly deprive yourselves of his joy and peace.

Secondly, Be humble under this advancement and dignity. If your hearts once begin to swell look out for humbling dispensations quickly, 2 Cor. xii. 7. This treasure is always kept in the vessel of a contrite and humble heart.

Thirdly, Keep close to duty; yea, tack one duty to another by intermediate ejaculations. If care of duty be once remitted, you are not far from a sad change of your condition.

Fourthly, Improve all ordinances, especially this great sealing ordinance, for your farther confirmation and establishment. Act your faith to the uttermost of its ability, upon Christ crucified; and comfort will flow in: The more the direct acts of faith are exercised, the more powerful and sweet its reflex acts are like to be.

THE FIFTH MEDITATION, UPON

JOHN i. 29. *Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſins of the world.*

THE ſcope of this chapter, is to prove the divinity and eternal Godhead of Jeſus Chriſt. One of thoſe arguments by which this great article of faith is confimred and proved is the teſtimony of John. This teſtimony of John is the more remarkable, becauſe it was before propheſied of him, that when the Meſſiah ſhould come, this meſſenger ſhould go before his face, to prepare the way for him, Mal. iii. 1.

Now, among all the teſtimonies that ever John gave of Chriſt, none ever was, or could be more full and clear than this in the text: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſins of "the world!"

In which words are remarkable, 1. The *preface* to his teſtimony. 2. The teſtimony itſelf.

Firſt, The preface or introduction to John's teſtimony; Behold! there is a double uſe in ſcripture of this word: ſometimes it is uſed by way of indication, and ſometimes by way of excitation. In the firſt, it points out the perſon; in the laſt, it raiſes our affections to him. In this place it hath both theſe uſes.

Behold the Lamb of God! q. d. 'This is the great expectati-'on and hope of all ages. This perſon whom you behold, is 'the *deſire of all nations*. Lo this, is *God manifeſt in the fleſh*. 'This is the great ſacrifice, *the Lamb of God*: Never did hu-'man eyes behold ſuch an object before.'

Secondly, The teſtimony itſelf: Which muſt be conſidered two ways; as it reſpects. 1. The truth and reality; 2. The virtue and dignity of Chriſt its object.

Firſt, John's teſtimony reſpects the truth and reality of the object: *This is* ὁ ἀμνὸς, *the Lamb of God*; the very *antitype* to which all legal ſacrifices had reſpect, and from which they derived all their value and virtue; *grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt*, as he had ſaid before, ver. 17. The paſchal lamb and the lamb for daily ſacrifice, were but the types and ſhadows of this *Lamb of God*.

Secondly, His teſtimony reſpects the virtue and dignity of Chriſt and his blood. *He taketh away the ſin of the world.* The Greek word, αιρει, (as *De Dieu*, a learned critic, obſerves) anſwers both the Hebrew words, נָשָׂא, Iſa. liii. and ſignify not only to *bear*, but to *bear away*; *Potando expiat, expiando aufert, efficitque ut remittatur.* By bearing ſin, he expiates it; by expiating, takes it away, or procures the remiſſion of it. The expreſſion ſeems to allude to the *ſcape-goat*, mentioned Lev. xvi. 22. Thus Chriſt really and wholly takes away the ſin of the world; *i. e.* the ſin of all believers in the world, for whom he was ſacrificed? as Druſius well expounds it, concurring with the ſtream of ſound expoſitors.

So that this is a very full teſtimony which John gives to Chriſt, and it is given with great affection, and admiration of him: *Behold!* yea, admire in beholding *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the world.* Behold him with affections ſuitable to ſuch an object; *Ecce perſona a Deo ordinata, in victimam ad expiandum peccata.* Grotius. Behold the perſon appointed by God, for a ſacrifice to expiate ſin! Now, tho' this ſcripture be very fruitful in practical obſervations, yet it is not my purpoſe, at this time, to note or proſecute any of them except this one, which riſes from the prefatory particle, or that note of admiration, with which John's teſtimony of Chriſt is uſhered in; *Behold the Lamb of God!* And the note thence will be this:

Doct. *That Jeſus Chriſt, the Lamb of God, is to be beheld with admiration and affection ſuitable to ſuch an object.*

Chriſt is beheld by men three ways:

Firſt, Carnally, with an eye of fleſh: So men ſaw him in the days of his fleſh, and deſpiſed him, Iſa. liii. 2. Carnal eyes ſaw no beauty in him, that he ſhould be deſired.

Secondly, Fiducially, by the eye of faith: believing, is ſeeing Chriſt, John vi. 40. Faith is to the ſaints inſtead of eyes: By it they make Chriſt preſent, tho' the heavens have received him out of our carnal ſight.

Thirdly, Beatifically, by the glorified eye: ſo *the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect* do, by their mental eye, ſee him in glory; and all the ſaints, after the reſurrection, ſhall with theſe coporeal eyes, ſee their Redeemer, according to Job xix. 26, 27.

The ſight of Chriſt by faith (which is all the ſight of him that any man now hath, or can have in this world) as it is much more excellent than the firſt; for "bleſſed are they that have "not ſeen, and yet believe," John xx. 29. ſo it is much inferior

to the laſt; 1 Cor. xiii. 12. "For now we ſee darkly through a "glaſs, but then face to face." But tho' it be an inferior viſion in reſpect of that which is immediate and perfect; yet the eye of faith is a precious eye, and the viſions of Chriſt by faith, are raviſhing viſions: and he that beholds Chriſt, the *Lamb of God*, by a ſteady fixed eye of faith, cannot but admire, and be deeply affected with ſuch a ſight of him. The views of Chriſt by faith, are raviſhing and tranſporting views, 1 Pet. i. 8. "Whom having not ſeen, ye love; in whom, though now "ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeak-"able, and full of glory."

It is a diſparagement to ſo glorious an object as Chriſt, to behold him, and not wonder; to ſee, and not love him. Certainly the admiration, love, delight, and joy of our hearts, are all the command of faith: for let us but conſider what raviſhing excellencies are in Chriſt, for the eye of a believer to behold and admire.

Firſt, God is in Chriſt, 2 Cor. v. 19. He is *God manifeſt in the fleſh*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. A God incarnate, is the world's wonder! Here is finite and infinite joined in one; eternity matched with time; the Creator and creature making but one perſon! "The Lord hath created a new thing upon the earth; A "woman ſhall compaſs a man," Jer. xxxi. 22. It is an argument of weakneſs, to admire little things; and of ſtupidity, not to admire great things. 'Many miracles (ſaith one) were 'wrought by Chriſt in the fleſh; but the greateſt of all mi-'racles was his aſſumption of fleſh.'

Secondly, The wiſdom of God is in Chriſt; yea, *in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. Never did the divine wiſdom diſplay its glorious beams, in the eyes of men and angels, in any work of God ſince the beginning of time, as it hath done in the deſignation of Chriſt to be the Lamb of God, a ſacrifice for ſin. *Behold the Lamb of God!* and in him behold the unſearchable wiſdom of God, in recovering the elect perfectly from all the danger of ſin, and yet making ſin more dreadful to them, by way of their recovery from it, than ever it could be made by any other conſideration.

Infinite wiſdom, in ſuiting the ſinner's remedy to the cauſe of his diſeaſe! The diſeaſe was the pride of man; the remedy was the humiliation of the Son of God. Man affected to be as God; that ruined him: God comes down, aſſumes fleſh, and will be found in faſhion as a man; that ſaved him.

O profound wiſdom! which from the loſs and ruin of our primitive glory (which was the undoing of us, ſoul and bo-

dy) takes the occaſion of raiſing us to a far better ſtate, and ſettles us in it with a much better ſecurity than the former.

Who but Jeſus Chriſt, the wiſdom of God, (as he is called, 1 Cor. i. 24.) could ever have ordered and over-ruled the worſt of evils, ſo as by occaſion of the breach of the law, to raiſe more glory to God, than ever could have been given to him by the moſt punctual obſervation of its commands, or by the moſt rigorous execution of its penalties? O the aſtoniſhing depth of wiſdom!

Thirdly, The love of God is in Chriſt. *Behold the Lamb of God!* and in him behold the love of God, in the higheſt and moſt triumphant diſcovery that ever was, or can be made of it in this world! 1 John iv. 10. "Herein is love, not that we "loved him, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the "propitiation for our ſins." O here, here is the love of God to ſinners! he manifeſts love to us, in our daily proviſions, protections, deliverances, and comforts. That we have health, when others groan under pains; therein is love: that we have bread to eat, when others are ready to periſh; therein is love. O! but to have Chriſt to be a propitiation for us, when the angels that fell were left deſperate; therein was love indeed! All the love that breaks out in the variety of providences for us in this world, in our health and eſtates, in our relations and comforts, is nothing compared with this love: Herein is love indeed!

Fourthly, The tender mercies of God over poor ſinners are in Chriſt. As Chriſt is the mercy promiſed, Luke i. 72. the capital mercy; ſo he is the channel, thro' which all the ſtreams of God's mercy flow freely to the ſons of men, Jude 21. The mercy of God to eternal life, or his ſaving mercies, are only diſpenſed to us thro' Jeſus Chriſt. *Behold the Lamb of God!* a Lamb prepared by the aſtoniſhing mercy of God, a ſacrifice for us, when no ſacrifice was laid out for fallen angels. Mercy alone hath made this difference: mercy opened its tender eye, and looked through Chriſt upon us, in the depth of our miſery: in Chriſt it is that the milder attribute of mercy is exerciſed upon us, whilſt ſevere juſtice puniſhes them.

Fifthly, All the hopes of poor ſinners are in Chriſt, Col. i. 27. Take away Chriſt, and where is the hope of our ſouls? Tim. i. 1. it is by the *blood of the Lamb* that *we have hope towards God:* in his oblation, and no where elſe, our hope of ſalvation finds footing: on him it is, the anchor of hope is fixed, and the ſoul ſtayed, when the ſtorms of fear and inward trouble do ariſe, and beat violently upon it.

Sixthly, The ſalvation of our ſouls to eternity, is in Chriſt;

Acts iv. 12. "Neither is there any other, name given under "heaven by which we must be saved." He is the ark, in whom we are preserved, Jude ver. 1. Look, as the sprinkling of the blood of the Paschal Lamb upon the door-posts of the Israelites, was that which preserved them from the destroying angel; so the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, typified by that blood, saves believers from the wrath to come.

But who can open the unsearchable riches, or recount the ravishing excellencies found in Christ? Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, behold, and admire for evermore, the incomparable excellencies of Christ! Heaven would be no heaven to them, if they could not behold Christ there, Psal. lxxiii. 25.

But my business rather lies in improving this point, than endeavouring farther to unfold it: for new wonders will appear in Christ, if we behold him to eternity.

Use. And all the improvement I shall make of it, shall be in one use of exhortation; beseeching every one of you, whatever your present condition and estate be, "to behold the Lamb of "God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" And,

First, If there be found among you any that are sensible of a stony hard heart, which cannot relent and mourn for all the wrong done to Jesus Christ, by sin, whose affections are benumbed and stupified by sin, so that no considerations they can urge upon their own hearts, are able to thaw them, and cause a relenting pang for sin; to such I would direct the words of this text, as the most effectual means to melt such hearts. Look hither, hard heart; "Behold the Lamb of God!" Consider, believe, and apply what is here sensibly represented; and thy heart is hard indeed, if it relent not upon such a view of Christ. It is said, Zech. xii. 10. "They shall look upon me, "whom they have pierced, and mourn." Behold the Son of God, brought "as a Lamb to the slaughter" for thee, a vile, polluted sinner! Behold the invaluable blood of this sacrifice, shed for thee! Bring thy thoughts close to this subject; think who it is that was made *a Lamb for sacrifice*; for whom he endured all his unspeakable sufferings; how meekly and willingly he endured all the wrath of God and men, standing in his perfect innocency, to be slain for thee. Behold! he was "made sin for thee, who had no sin; that thou, who hadst no "righteousness, mightest be made the righteousness of God in "him." Oh! whoever loved thee at that rate Christ hath done? Who would endure that misery that Christ did endure for thy sake? Would thy father, or the wife of thy bosom,

or thy friend, that is as thy own ſoul, be content to feel that for thee (though but one hour) which Chriſt felt, when "his "ſweet was as it had been great drops of blood falling to "down to the ground?" Nay, thou wouldeſt never taſte ſuch a cup for the ſaving of thine own child, as Chriſt drank off, when he cried, "My God! my God! why haſt thou forſaken "me?" Behold how he loved thee!

Surely, if the rocks rent aſunder at his paſſion, thy heart is harder than a rock, if it thaw not at ſuch a ſight as this. Fix thine eyes a while here, and thine eye will affect thy heart.

Secondly, Is there any among us that make too light of ſin, and are eaſily overcome by every temptation to the commiſſion of it? O come hither, and "behold the Lamb of God!" and you cannot poſſibly have ſlight thoughts of ſin after ſuch a ſight of Chriſt. See here the price of ſin! behold what it coſt the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to expiate it. Did he come into the world as a Lamb, bound with the bands of an irreverſible decree, to die for ſin? Did he come from the boſom of the Father, to be our ranſomer, and that at the price of his own life? Did the hand of ſevere juſtice ſhed the heart-blood of this immaculate Lamb, to ſatisfy for the wrongs thy ſins have done to God? And yet, canſt thou look upon ſin as a light matter? God forbid!

I remember, when the worthies of Iſrael brake through the hoſt of the Philiſtines, and brought unto David the waters of the well of Bethlehem, it is ſaid, 2 Sam. xxiii. 17. "He would "not drink thereof, but poured it out before the Lord, and "ſaid, Be it far from me, that I ſhould do this: Is not this the "blood of the men that went in jeopardy of their lives?"

He longed for it, and yet would not taſte it, how pleaſant ſoever it would have been to him, conſidering what hazard was run to obtain it.

Ah Chriſtian! it was but the hazard of their blood, that gave check to David's appetite to the water: And if the water had coſt an equal quantity of their blood, yet it had been but a low argument to diſſuade him from drinking it, to this conſideration that now lies before thee. Thy ſin actually coſt the blood of Chriſt; one drop whereof is more valuable than all human blood; and yet wilt thou not deny thy luſts, nor reſiſt a temptation for his ſake? "Behold the lamb of God, ſlain for "thy ſin!" and thou canſt never have ſlight thoughts of it any more.

Thirdly, Is there any among you that droop, and are diſcouraged in their ſpirits, becauſe of their manifold aggravated

iniquities; who being overweighed with the burthenſome ſenſe of ſin, deſpond and ſink in their minds? To ſuch I would apply the words of my text, as a ſovereign cordial, to revive their hearts and hopes: "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh a-"way the ſin of the world!"

If the blood of the Lamb can take away the ſin of the world, it can take away thy ſin, though there be a world of ſin in thee. For do but conſider Chriſt, as deſigned from eternity to be our propitiation; John vi. 27. "Him hath God the Father ſealed," as ſacrificed in our room, "in the fulneſs of time." 1 Cor. v. 7. "Chriſt our paſſover is ſacrificed for us:" As accepted by the Father with the greateſt content and pleaſure, even "as a "ſweet-ſmelling ſavour," Eph. v. 2. As publicly juſtified and diſcharged by God, the Creditor, at his reſurrection, 1 Tim. iii. 16. and John xvi. 9. And laſtly, Conſider him as now in heaven, where he "appears before God for us, as a Lamb that "had been ſlain," Rev. v. 6. bearing the very marks of his death, and preſenting them before God, as the moſt effectual and moving plea, to procure pardon, and mercy, for his people. Let theſe things, I ſay, be duly pondered, and nothing will be found more effectual to relieve the deſpondent minds of poor believers againſt the ſinking ſenſe of their ſin.

He that repreſents himſelf in the ſacrament as wounded for you, ſhews at the ſame time, to the Father in heaven, the real body that was wounded; than which nothing more effectually moves mercy, or ſtays the ſliding feet of a poor believer's hope: And that whether we conſider,

Firſt, The dignity of that body which was wounded; the moſt hallowed and deeply ſanctified thing that ever was created; Luke i. 35. "That holy thing."

Secondly, Or his vicegerency in ſuffering; "He was wound-"ed for our tranſgreſſions," Iſa. liii. 5. It was for that hard, proud, vain, dead heart, that thou complaineſt of. Or,

Thirdly, The end and deſign of thoſe wounds; which was to repair the honour of God, and the violated law: the language of that blood (which is ſaid to "ſpeak better things than "the blood of Abel," Heb. xii. 24.) is this:

'Father, have theſe poor ſouls wounded thy name, thine 'honour, thy law? Behold the wounds thy juſtice hath inflict-'ed on me, for reparation of all that wrong they have done 'thee!' O how ſweetly doth the blood of the Lamb ſettle the conſcience of a poor drooping believer!

Fourthly, Is there any among you that are faint-hearted, and ready to ſhrink away from any ſufferings for Chriſt, as un-

able to bear and endure any thing for his ſake? To ſuch I would ſay in the words of this text, *Behold the Lamb of God!* Did Chriſt ſuffer ſuch grievous things for you! and cannot you ſuffer ſmall matters for him? Alas! what is the wrath of man to the *wrath of the great and terrible God?* Beſides, he was an innocent Lamb, and deſerved not to ſuffer the leaſt degree of penal evil upon his own account; but thou haſt deſerved hell, and yet ſhrinkeſt under the ſufferings of a moment. Did he ſuffer ſo much for you; and can you ſuffer nothing for him? Surely he, in ſuffering for you, hath "left you an "example, that you ſhould follow his ſteps," 1 Pet. ii. 21. What! is our blood compared in dignity to the blood of Chriſt? What! are our ſufferings compared in kind, or degree, to the ſufferings of Chriſt? Nothing is found to fortify a man's ſpirit for ſufferings, as the meditation of Chriſt's ſufferings for us doth.

Fifthly, Is there any among you that are impatient under your own perſonal trials and troubles, apt to howl under common afflictions from the hand of God, or ſwell with revenge under injuries from the hands of men? To ſuch I would ſay, *Behold the Lamb of God!* Was Chriſt a Lamb for meekneſs, and art thou a lion for fierceneſs? Was he ſilent, not once opening his mouth, when he ſuffered moſt vile things from the hands of ſinners, and can you bear nothing? He ſuffered patiently, and deſerved it not; you ſuffer impatiently, and have deſerved infinitely more.

O that you would learn to be more Chriſt-like in all your trials and afflictions! let it not be ſaid, that Chriſt carried it as a Lamb when he was tried, and we like ſwine, grumbling or howling when we are tried. O get a Chriſt-like temper!

Sixthly, Is there any among you that ſtagger at the promiſes, through unbelief, that cannot rely upon a word of promiſe, becauſe their own unbelieving hearts fill them with unworthy ſuſpicions of the power, faithfulneſs, or willingneſs of God to perform them to them? O that ſuch would *behold the Lamb of God*, as repreſented in this ordinance! Are not all the promiſes of God ſealed to believers in the blood of the Lamb? Heb. ix. 17, 18, 19, 20. Are not all the promiſes of God, in Chriſt, "Yea, and Amen, to all that are in him?" 2 Cor. i. 20. Or is there any thing put into any promiſe of greater value than the blood of the Lamb, that was ſhed to purchaſe it? Or is not the giving of Chriſt to die for us, the accompliſhment of the greateſt promiſe that ever God made to us? And after

the fulfilling thereof, what ground remains for any to doubt the fulfilling of leſſer promiſes?

Laſtly, Is there any among you that deſire to get up your affections at this table, to have your hearts in a melting temper, to awaken and rouze up all the powers of your ſouls in ſo great an occaſion for it as this? *Behold the Lamb of God!* and this will do it.

Chriſt calls off your eyes and thoughts from all other objects to himſelf; Iſa. lxv. 11. "I ſaid, Behold me! behold "me!" Fix the eye of faith here, and you will feel a pang quickly coming upon your hearts like that, Cant. ii. 5. "Stay me "with flaggons, comfort me with apples; I am ſick with love." Your eyes will affect your hearts; whilſt you behold, your hearts will melt within you.

THE SIXTH MEDITATION, UPON

Rom. viii. 32. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things.*

THIS ſcripture contains a moſt weighty argument to encourage and confirm the faith of Chriſtians in the expectation of all ſpiritual and temporal mercies. It proceeds from the greater to the leſſer affirmatively: he that delivered his Son for us, what can he deny us after ſuch a gift? Every word hath its weight.

Did not God ſpare (*i. e.* abate) any thing which his juſtice could inflict upon his Son, his own Son, oppoſed here to his adopted ſons, as being infinitely more excellent than they, and moſt dear to him above and beyond all others; but, on the contrary, delivered him up, how dear ſoever he was unto him, to humiliation, contradiction of ſinners, to all ſorrows and temptations, yea, to death, and that of the croſs, and all this *for us*, for *us ſinners*, for *us enemies to God*, for *us unlovely wretches?* "How ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all "things?" How is it imaginable that God ſhould with-hold after this, ſpirituals or temporals, from his people? How ſhall he not call them effectually, juſtify them freely, ſanctify them thoroughly, and glorify them eternally? How ſhall he not cloath them, feed them, protect, and deliver them?

Surely if he would not ſpare or abate to his own Son one ſtroke, one tear, one groan, one ſigh, one circumſtance of miſery, it can never be imagined that ever he ſhould, after this, deny or withhold from his people, for whoſe ſakes all this was ſuffered, any mercies, any comforts, any privilege, ſpiritual or temporal, which is good for them, and needful to them. So that in the words we find, 1. A propoſition. 2. An inference from it.

The propoſition opens the ſeverity of God's juſtice to Chriſt; the inference declares the riches of his mercy to us in Chriſt.

1. We have here before us a propoſition, containing the ſeverity of divine juſtice towards Chriſt; and this is expreſſed two ways, *viz.*

1*ſt*. Negatively; he ſpared him not.

2*dly*, Affirmatively; he delivered him up for us.

1*ſt*, Negatively; *He ſpared not his own Son.* There is a threefold mercy of God, *viz.* Preventing mercy, which ſteps between us and trouble: delivering mercy, which takes us out of the hand of trouble; and ſparing mercy, which tho' it do not prevent nor deliver, yet it mitigates, allays, and graciouſly moderates our troubles; and tho' ſparing mercy be deſirable and ſweet, yet it is the leaſt and loweſt ſort of mercy that God exerciſes towards any. Tho' it be mercy to have the time of ſufferings ſhortned, or one degree of ſuffering abated, yet theſe are the loweſt and leaſt effects of mercy; and yet theſe were denied Jeſus Chriſt, when he ſtood in our room to ſatisfy for us: God ſpared not one drop, he abated not one degree of that wrath which Chriſt was to ſuffer for us.

2*dly*, Affirmatively; but on the contrary, *He delivered him up for us all.*

He delivered him, as a judge by ſentence of law delivers up the priſoner to be executed. It is true, Pilate delivered him to be crucified, and he alſo gave himſelf for us: but betwixt God's delivering, Pilate's delivering, and his own, there is this difference to be obſerved; in God it was an act of higheſt juſtice; in Pilate an act of greateſt wickedneſs; in himſelf, an act of wonderful obedience.

God, as by an act of higheſt juſtice, delivered him up *for us*. *For us*, notes the vicegerency of his ſufferings, not only for our good, as the final cauſe; nor only for our ſins, as the meritorious cauſe; but for *us*, (*i. e.*) in our room, place, or ſtead according to 1 Pet. iii. 18. and 2 Cor. v. 14.

2. We have also here before us a most sweet and comfortable inference and conclusion from this proposition: If God have so delivered him, *how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* For Christ comprehends all other mercies in himself; therefore in giving him *for us*, all other mercies are necessarily with him given *to us*.

And these mercies the poorest, weakest believer in the world may warrantably expect from God; for as God delivered him *for us all*, so the treasures of all spiritual and temporal mercies are thereby freely opened to us all, to the weak as well as to the strong.

He saith not, Christ was delivered for all absolutely, but *for us all; i. e.* all that believe, all that are elected and called; in whose person it is manifest the apostle here speaks, as Paraeus on the place well observes. Hence these two doctrinal conclusions fairly offer themselves.

Doct. 1. *That the rigour and severity of divine justice was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he suffered for us.*

Doct. 2. *That believers may strongly infer the greatest of mercies to themselves, from the severity of God's justice to Jesus Christ.*

I would willingly speak to both these points at this time, each affording such proper matter of meditation to us in such a season as this. To begin therefore with the first observation.

Doct. 1. *That the rigour and severity of divine justice was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he suffered for us; God did not spare him.*

In Zech. xiii. 7. you have God's commission given to the sword of justice, to smite his own Son, and that without pity; "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against "the man that is my fellow; smite the Shepherd," *&c.* And when this commission came to be executed upon Christ, the text tells us, *God did not spare him*: all the vials of his wrath were poured out to the last drop.

Two things require our attention in this point: 1. Wherein the severity of justice to Christ appeared. 2. Why must justice be executed on him in such rigour and severity? Why there could be no abatement, mitigation, or sparing mercy shewn him in that day?

1. Wherein the severity of divine justice to Christ appeared? And this will manifest itself in the consideration of the following particulars.

First, Let us consider what Jesus Christ suffered, and we shall see the severity of justice in his sufferings, for he suffered

all kinds of miſeries, and that in the moſt intenſe degree of them: His ſufferings were from all hands, from heaven, earth, and hell; from his enemies, who condemned him, buffeted him, reviled, ſcourged, and crucified him; from his own diſciples and followers, one of whom perfidiouſly betrayed him, another openly denied him, and all in the hour of his greateſt trouble forſook and abandoned him.

He ſuffered in his body the moſt exquiſite torments; the croſs was a cruel engine of torment, and more ſo to him than any other, by reaſon of the excellent *craſis* and *temperament* of his body, and his moſt acute and delicate ſenſe; for, as the ſchoolmen truly ſay, he was *optime complexionatus*, of the moſt exact and exquiſite complexion; and his ſenſes remained acute and vigorous, no way blunted, during the whole time of his ſufferings, but full of life and ſenſe to the laſt gaſp, as may be gathered from Mark xv. 39. "When the centurion, which ſtood "over againſt him, ſaw that he ſo cried out, and gave up the "ghoſt, he ſaid, Truly this man was the Son of God."

He ſuffered in his ſoul; yea, the ſufferings of his ſoul were the very ſoul of his ſufferings; he felt in his inner man the exquiſite torments and inexpreſſible anguiſh of the wrath of God. Hence was that preternatural bloody ſweat in the garden; and hence that heart-rending out-cry upon the croſs, *My God! my God! why haſt thou forſaken me?*

In all which ſufferings from heaven, from earth, from hell, from friends, from enemies, there was no allay, or abatement of the leaſt degree of miſery. "God ſpared not his own Son," (ſaith the text) "but delivered him up." Wherein the ſeverity of divine juſtice to Jeſus Chriſt, is diſplayed in theſe five remarkable conſiderations following.

Firſt, God ſpared not. If mercy, pity, and forbearance might be expected from any hand, ſurely it might be God; he is the fountain of mercy; "That the Lord is very pitiful, and "of tender mercy," ſaith the apoſtle, James v. 11. The moſt melting and tender compaſſions of a mother to her ſucking child, are but cruelty in compariſon with divine tenderneſs and mercy; Iſa. xlix. 15. "Can a woman forget her ſucking "child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her "womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."

Can a woman, the more affectionate ſex, forget her ſucking child, her own child (and not a nurſe-child) her only child, whilſt it hangs on her breaſt, and, with the milk from her breaſt, draws love from her heart? Can ſuch a thing as this be in nature! Poſſibly it may; ſome ſuch cruel mothers

may be found, but *yet I will not forget thee*, saith God. Though human corrupt nature may be so vitiated, yet from the divine nature, compassion and mercy are inseparable; it flows as waters flow from their fountain, only here it restrained itself, and let not out one drop to Jesus Christ, in the day of his sufferings: God, the God of mercy, spared not.

Secondly, God *spared not*, saith the text; *i. e.* he abated not any thing which justice could inflict: Christ was not spared one stroke, one tear, one groan, one drop, one sigh, one shame, one circumstance, no, not the least which justice could demand as satisfaction for man's sin.

There be divers kinds of mercy in God; there is in him preventing mercy, delivering mercy, and sparing mercy. Now sparing mercy (as Mr. Caryl on Job well observes) is the lowest mercy of all the three; it is less mercy to be spared or abated some degree or circumstance of misery, than to have misery prevented by mercy's stepping in betwixt us and it; it is less also than to be wholly delivered out of the hand of misery: Either of these are greater acts of mercy, than to abate a degree, or shorten an hour of our trouble; the least abatement of any one circumstance of misery had been sparing mercy, though it had been but the least and lowest act of mercy; and yet even this was denied to Christ; he was not abated one minute of time, or the least degree of sorrow. God spared not.

Thirdly, He *spared not his own Son*, τὸν ἴδιον. So stiled *ἰδιαιτέρως*, his own or his proper Son, in a special and peculiar manner nearer and dearer to him than the angels, who are his sons by creation, Job i. 6. or any of the saints, who are his sons by grace, in the way of regeneration and adoption, John i. 12, 13. This was his own Son by nature, a son of an higher rank and order, Psal. ii. 7. begotten in an ineffable manner, from all eternity, in his own divine essence; and so is his Son by nature, having the same essence and nature with the Father, being co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with the Father.

No relation in nature is so intimate, strict and dear as this; our children are not so much our own children, our bodies are not so much our own bodies, as Christ was God's own Son; and yet, though he were so dear to him, his other self, his express image, his own dear Son, *He spared him not: God spared not his own Son.*

Fourthly, And that which makes a farther discovery of the severity towards Jesus Christ, is this, that God spared not

his own Son in the day of his greateſt diſtreſs, when he cried to his Father in an agony, that if it were poſſible the cup might paſs from him: For of that day, this ſcripture is mainly to be underſtood, the day when he fell to the ground and prayed, "That if it were poſſible the hour might paſs from him. "And he ſaid, Abba, Father, all things are poſſible unto thee, "take away this cup from me," Mark xiv. 35, 36. He beheld his own dear Son ſweltering under the heavieſt preſſure of his wrath, ſweating great drops of blood, crying, "If it be poſſible, "let this hour, let this cup paſs;" and yet it could not be granted. O the ſeverity of God! he heard the cry of Ahab, and ſpared him; he heard the Ninevites cry, and ſpared them; he heard the cries of Hagar and Iſhmael, and ſpared them; yea, he hears the young *ravens* when they cry, and feeds them; but, when his Son cried with the moſt vehement cry, that the cup might paſs, he cannot be excuſed, he muſt drink it up, even the very dregs of the cup of trembling, and that to the laſt drop. O the juſtice and ſeverity of God!

Fiftly, and *laſtly*, Conſider what the Father of mercies did inſtead of ſparing the Son of his love, and the text will inform you, that "he delivered him up for us all." So it is noted in Acts ii. 23. "Him, being delivered by the deter-"minate counſel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, "and by wicked hands have crucified and ſlain."

There was a conceſſion or permiſſion to thoſe wicked inſtruments that ſhed his blood, a looſing of the chain to thoſe bandogs that compaſſed him about; ſuch a conceſſion as never was given them before; for till then they were tied up from perpetrating their wickedneſs; but now the reſtraints of Providence are taken away, and he is delivered unto their will; his own Father delivers him into the hands of cruelty. And thus you ſee wherein the ſeverity of divine juſtice to Chriſt was manifeſt.

In the laſt place, let us ſee the ground and reaſon of this rigour and ſeverity to Chriſt. Now, there are, among others, three ſpecial reaſons why Chriſt could not be ſpared.

The honour of divine juſtice required, that he ſhould ſuffer the utmoſt degree of puniſhment. It was meet that the rights of heaven ſhould be vindicated to the full, and that the juſtice of God ſhould have the laſt mite it could demand for ſatisfaction. And this was the ſpecial deſign and aim of God in the ſuffering of Chriſt, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, Rom. iii. 25, 26. It was "to declare his righteouſneſs;" and leſt we ſhould loſe the emphatical word, it is doubled and repeated, "to declare,

"I say, at this time his righteousness." And indeed herein God fully obtained his design; for never was justice so honoured before, to have such a person as the Son of God stand at its bar, and such a sum as his blood paid down at once for our discharge: so that justice triumphs as well as mercy, and one attribute is not robbed to pay another.

As it was necessary to God's satisfaction, so it was necessary to ours also. If the Lord Jesus had not made full payment to the utmost mite, we could never have had full satisfaction in our consciences, about that deep and dear concernment of our souls, the remission of sin. Man is a guilty and a suspicious creature, and hard to be brought to an entire confidence in the pardoning mercy of God. Yea, it is impossible to persuade a convinced conscience, of the possibility of remission, except you can also prove the fulness of divine satisfaction; for conscience requires as much to satisfy it, as God doth to satisfy him. If God be satisfied, then conscience can be satisfied too, and securely rest upon that ground; but if there be any doubt of that, there is no appeasing of an anxious and jealous conscience: greatly therefore hath God consulted our peace in the severity of his justice to Jesus Christ. "Now the God of peace, "who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great "Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting "covenant," Heb. xiii. 20. Let the words be weighed; he is stiled the God of peace, when he brought back Christ from the dead; it was incensed justice that put him to death, and appeased justice that brought him back from the dead; and that which pacified God, is the only thing in the world that is able to satisfy the conscience of a sinner.

3. Therefore did God proceed with such rigour and severity with Jesus Christ, that thereby the demerit and evil of sin might be fully discovered to the world, and an everlasting caution left upon all hearts to beware of contracting new guilt. If justice had descended in a visible form, and hanged up millions of sinners in chains, it had not been such a warning as this against sin. Nay, let me say, the grievous and eternal torment that the damned suffer in hell, is not such a demonstration of the evil of sin as this is; for those torments are much unknown to men till they feel them; and when they begin to feel them, it is too late to be convinced or cautioned against sin then. But to see such a person as Christ exposed to the utmost severity of God's wrath for our sin, to see such things done in the green tree, may well make us cry out, "Lord, "what will be done to the dry tree?" O the infinite evil of

ſin! O the inflexible ſeverity of divine juſtice! It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

4. In a word; hereby Jeſus Chriſt is endeared the more to his people; by ſuffering ſuch great and hard things in their place and for their ſakes. The extremity of his ſufferings for us, commands the ſtrength of his affection to us.

And thus you ſee the reaſons of all this ſeverity to Jeſus Chriſt. God intended the ſweeteſt mercies for you; and therefore prepared the bittereſt ſufferings for Chriſt: from his deep ſufferings you may confidently conclude the beſt of mercies are deſigned for you; as you will hear in the proſecuting of the ſecond doctrine, which, for diſpatch, I purpoſe to handle as one uſe of this point now before me.

O the admirable and aſtoniſhing love of God to us poor worms of the earth, to deliver up his own Son into the hands of his enemies, that thirſted for his blood! Long had they been reſtrained from ſatisfying their wickedneſs, and executing their malice, till now; and this was the hour which he often ſpake of, "My hour is not yet come." But, oh! what a diſmal hour was it when it did come, when Providence let looſe both devils and men upon Chriſt, delivered him over to the will of his enemies! And this was not all; Chriſt was not only delivered up into the hands of the worſt of men, but, which was much more terrible, into the ſevere hands of divine juſtice, to grapple with the pure, unmixed, and unallayed wrath of the great and terrible God.

Laſtly, We will improve this point by a double uſe, by way of information, and exhortation.

Uſe 1. *Of information.*

Firſt, The ſeverity of God's juſtice to Jeſus Chriſt informs us what a dreadful evil ſin is, which ſo incenſes the wrath of God even againſt his own Son, when he bare our ſins, and ſtood before the bar of God as our ſurety.

Come hither, hard hearts (hard indeed if this cannot break them;) you complain, you cannot ſee the evil of ſin, ſo as to be deeply humbled for it: fix your eyes a while here, and intently conſider the point in hand: ſuppoſe you ſaw a tender and pitiful father come into open court with fury in his face, to charge his own, his only, and his moſt beloved Son, and to proſecute him to death, and nothing able to ſatisfy him but his blood, and be well pleaſed when he ſees it ſhed; would you not ſay, Oh! what horrid evil hath he done! It muſt be ſome deep wrong, ſome heinous crime that he is guilty of, elſe it

could never be that his own father could forget his bowels of pity and mercy. Yet thus did the wrath of God break forth againſt his dear Son, when he ſtood before the bar, as our ſurety, charged with the guilt of our ſins.

Secondly, Learn hence what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Well might Luther cry out, *Nolo Deum abſolutum, Let me have nothing to do with an abſolute God.* Wo to them that ſtand before God in their own perſons, without Chriſt, how will juſtice handle them! "For "if theſe things were done in the green tree, what ſhall be done "in the dry tree?" Luke xxiii. 31. Did the Son of God fear, tremble, ſweat clots of blood? Did he ſtand amazed, and fall into ſuch an agony of ſoul when he drank that cup, which he knew in a few hours he ſhould drink up, and then never taſte the bitterneſs of it more? How ſad is their caſe that muſt drink of that cup for ever, a cup that hath eternity to the bottom!

Thirdly, How incomprehenſible and raviſhing is the love of God to men, that would rather be ſo ſevere to Jeſus Chriſt, the darling of his ſoul, than make us the objects of wrath for ever? Which of you (though there be infinitely leſs tenderneſs in your hearts than God's) would lay your hands upon a child, the worſt child you have, and put him to death for the ſake of the beſt friend you have in the world? But God with his own hand delivered his Son, his only Son, that from everlaſting was the delight of his ſoul, who never offended him, to death, the moſt curſed and cruel death, and all this for enemies: how unſpeakable is this love, and paſt finding out!

Fourthly, Did not God ſpare his own Son? then let none of us ſpare our own ſins. Sin was that ſword which pierced Chriſt: O let ſorrow for ſin pierce your hearts! if you ſpare ſin, God will not ſpare you, Deut. xxix. 20. We ſpare ſin when we faintly oppoſe it, when we excuſe, cover and defend it, when we are impatient under juſt rebukes and reproofs for it; but all kindneſs to ſin is cruelty to our own ſouls.

Fifthly, and *laſtly*, If God did not ſpare Chriſt, certainly he intends to ſpare believers for his ſake.

The ſurety could not be ſpared, that the principal might be ſpared for ever. If God had ſpared him, he could not have ſpared us; if he afflicts his people, it is not for ſatisfaction to himſelf, but profit to us, Heb. xii. 10. Should God ſpare the rod of affliction, it would not be for our advangtage; ſo many ſanctified afflictions as are ſpared or abated, ſo many mercies and ſpiritual advantages are withheld from us. But as for thoſe ſtrokes of juſtice that are the effects of God's vindictive wrath,

they ſhall never be felt by believers for ever. All the wrath, all the curſe, all the gall and wormwood was ſqueezed into Chriſt's cup, and not one drop left to imbitter ours.

Uſe 2. Of Exhortation.

Did not God ſpare his own Son, but give him up to the death for us all! Then poſſeſs your hearts fully in the aſſurance of this great truth, *That the greateſt and beſt of mercies ſhall not be denied or withheld from you, if you be in Chriſt;* lay it down as a ſure concluſion of faith, and build up your hope and comfort upon it. This takes in the ſecond obſervation; and ſurely never was any truth better fortified, never any inference more ſtrongly inferred. Henceforth ye may infer temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal mercies; all muſt be yours, if you be Chriſt's, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23. O, make ſure that Chriſt's is yours, and never heſitate at any other mercy! For,

Firſt, God hath certainly a value and eſteem for his own Son infinitely above all other things; he is his own Son, his dear Son, Col. i. 13. the *Beloved*, Eph. i. 6. the *delight of his ſoul*, Iſa. xlii. 1. Nothing is valued by God at that rate that Chriſt is valued. If therefore he ſpare not the moſt excellent mercy, but parts with the very darling of his ſoul for us, how ſhall he deny, or with-hold, any leſſer inferior mercy? It is not to be imagined, for he is *the mercy*, emphatically ſo called, Luke i. 72.

Secondly, Jeſus Chriſt is a comprehenſive mercy, including all other mercies in himſelf; he is the tree of life, all other mercies are but the fruits growing on him; he is the *ſun of righteouſneſs*; and whatever comfort, ſpiritual or natural, refreſhes your ſouls or bodies, is but a beam from that ſun, a ſtream from that fountain. If then God part with Chriſt to you, and for you, he will not withhold other mercies; he will not give the whole tree, and deny an apple; beſtow the fountain itſelf, and deny you the ſtreams. All ſpiritual mercies are in him, and given with him; Eph. i. 3. "Bleſſed be the "God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed "us with all ſpiritual bleſſings, in heavenly places in Chriſt "Jeſus." All temporals are in him, and given with him, Matth. vi. 33. they are additionals to that great mercy.

Thirdly, If God ſpared not Chriſt, the beſt mercy, but delivered him up for us all when we were his enemies, then certainly he will not deny leſſer mercies when we are reconciled and made friends to him. And this is the forcible reaſon of the apoſtle, which even compels aſſent; Rom. v. 9. "Much

"more, being now juſtified by his blood, we ſhall be ſaved "from wrath through him." In a word,

Fourthly, and *laſtly*, If it were the very deſign and intention of God in not ſparing his own Son, to open thereby a door for all mercies to be let in upon us, then it is not imaginable he ſhould withhold them: he will not loſe his deſign, nor lay ſo many ſtripes upon Chriſt in vain: ſome ſhall ſurely have the benefit of it, and none ſo capable as believers.

When God ſpared not his own Son, this was the deſign of it; and could you know the thoughts of his heart, they would appear to be ſuch as theſe:

I will now manifeſt the fierceneſs of my wrath to Chriſt, and the fulneſs of my love to believers. The pain ſhall be his, that the eaſe and reſt may be theirs; the ſtripes his, and the healing balm iſſuing from them, theirs; the condemnation his, and the juſtification theirs; the reproach and ſhame his, and the honour and glory theirs; the curſe his, and the bleſſing theirs; the death his, and the life theirs; the vinegar and gall his, the ſweet of it theirs. He ſhall groan, and they ſhall triumph; he ſhall mourn, that they may rejoice; his heart ſhall be heavy for a time, that theirs may be light and glad for ever; he ſhall be forſaken, that they may never be forſaken; out of the worſt of miſeries to him, ſhall ſpring the ſweeteſt of mercies to them. O grace! grace beyond conception of the largeſt mind, the expreſſion of the tongues of angels!

THE SEVENTH MEDITATION, UPON

MARK ix. 24. *And ſtraightway the father of the child cried out, and ſaid with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.*

THE occaſion of theſe words is to be gathered from the context: and briefly it was this; A tender father brings a poſſeſſed child to Chriſt to be cured; with *Si potes?* a doubting queſtion, "If thou canſt do any thing? have compaſſion "upon us, and help us:" Words importing much natural affection and tender love to his child; "Have compaſſion [up-"on us,] and [help us.]" If the child be ſick, the parent is not well; what touches the child, is felt by his father.

And as they import his natural affection to his child, ſo alſo his own ſpiritual diſeaſe, or the weakneſs of his faith. His child was poſſeſſed with a dumb devil, and himſelf with unbelieving doubts and ſuſpicions of Chriſt's ability to cure his child. The child had a ſick body, and the father an infirm ſoul: Satan afflicted one by a poſſeſſion, and the other by temptation, ver. 22.

Chriſt returns his doubting language upon himſelf, ver. 23. "If thou canſt believe, all things are poſſible to him that believeth:" *q. d.* Doſt thou doubt of my ability to heal thy child? Queſtion rather thy own ability to believe, for his cure. If he be not healed, the cauſe will not be in my inability, but in thine own infidelity: Which he ſpeaks not, to inſinuate that faith was in his own power, but to convince him of his weakneſs, and drive him to God for aſſiſtance: Which effect it obtained; for immediately he cried out, and ſaid with tears, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

O how good is it for men to be brought into the ſtraits of affliction ſometimes! Had not this man fallen into this diſtreſs, it is not like that he had (at leaſt not ſo ſoon) arrived either to the ſenſe of his grace, or the weakneſs of it.

In the words we may note theſe three parts.

Firſt, A profeſſion of his faith; *Lord, I believe.*

Secondly, A ſenſe of the weakneſs of his faith; *Help thou my unbelief.*

Thirdly, The affection with which both were uttered; *He cried out, and ſaid with tears.* If theſe tears proceeded from the ſenſe and feeling of divine power, enabling him to believe, as ſome think; then they were tears of joy, and would inform us of this great truth:

Doct. 1. *That the leaſt and loweſt meaſure of true faith, is matter of joy unſpeakable to the poſſeſſor of it.*

If they proceeded from the ſenſe of the weakneſs of his faith, then they give us this note:

Doct. 2. *That the remainders of unbelief in the people of God, do coſt them many tears: They are the burdens and ſorrows of gracious ſouls.*

Doct. 1. *That the leaſt and loweſt meaſure of true faith, is matter of joy unſpeakable to the poſſeſſor of it.*

The apoſtle, in 2 Pet. i. 1. calls it *precious faith*; and it well deſerves that epithet; for the leaſt and loweſt degree of ſaving faith, is of invaluable excellency; as will appear in theſe particulars:

Firſt, The leaſt degree of ſaving faith, truly unites the ſoul

to Jeſus Chriſt, and makes it as really a branch or member of him, as Moſes, Abraham, or Paul were.

All ſaving faith receives Chriſt, John i. 12. Indeed, the ſtrong believer receives him with a ſtronger and ſteadier hand than the weak one doth, who ſtaggers, doubts, and trembles, but yet receives him; and conſequently is as much intereſted in the bleſſed privileges flowing from union, as the greateſt believer in the world. Such is Chriſt's complacency in our perſons and duties, his ſympathy with us in our troubles and afflictions, and our intereſt in his perſon and purchaſe. And is not this matter of exceeding joy? Is it not enough to melt, yea, overwhelm the heart of a poor ſinner, to diſcover and feel that in his own heart, which entitles him to ſuch mercies?

Secondly, From the leaſt degree of ſaving faith, we may infer as plenary a remiſſion of ſin, as from the ſtrongeſt. The weakeſt believer is as completely pardoned, as the ſtrongeſt; Acts x. 43. "By him all that believe are juſtified from all "things." *All that believe*, without difference of ſizes, ſtrength, or degrees; the leaſt as well as the greateſt; the believer of a day old, as well as the fathers and worthies of greateſt name, and longeſt ſtanding.

Lo then, the leaſt meaſure of faith entitles thee as really to the greateſt bleſſing, as the higheſt acts of faith can do. It is true, the ſtronger the acting of faith is, the clearer the evidence uſually is; but intereſt in the privilege is the ſame in both. If then thou canſt diſcern but the weakeſt act and ſmalleſt meaſure of faith in thy ſoul, haſt thou not reaſon, with him in the text, to cry out, and ſay with tears, *Lord, I believe?* Canſt thou receive and read this pardon, the pardon of ſuch, and ſo many ſins, and not wet it with thy tears? O, it is matter of joy unſpeakable!

Thirdly, The leaſt degree of ſaving faith infers thy election of God; and if that be not matter of melting and tranſporting conſideration, nothing is. O, it is matter of more joy, that our names *are written in the book of life*, than that the devils are ſubject to us, Luke x. 20. From hence it may be inferred, that we are choſen of God; Acts xiii. 48. "As many as were "ordained to eternal life, believed."

Fourthly, The leaſt meaſure of ſaving faith, is a mercy greater than moſt men ever partake of.

It is true, God is rich and bountiful in the gifts of providence to others; they have the good things of this life, many of them more than their hearts can wiſh, Pſal. lxxiii. 7. He enricheth many of them alſo with endowments of the mind, na-

tural and moral knowledge and wisdom; yea, and adorns them with homilitical virtues, that render them very desirable and lovely in their converses with men; but there are but few to whom he gives saving faith, Isa. liii. 1. Believers are but a small remnant among men.

Fifthly, and *lastly*, He that hath any, the least degree of saving faith, hath that which will never be taken from him: All other excellencies go away at death, Job iv. 21. but this is a spring that never fails, "it springs up into everlasting life," John iv. 14. A man may outlive his friends and familiars, his estate and health, his gifts and natural parts, but not his faith. How great matter of joy and comfort is wrapt up in the least degree of faith!

Use 1. *Of trial.*

It concerns us then to examine ourselves, whether our faith be true, be it more or less, stronger or weaker; and, until we discern its truth, it will yield but little comfort.

I confess, weak believers are under great disadvantages as to comfort; small and weak things being usually very inevident and undiscernible. But yet, in this example before us, we find weak faith was made evident, though much unbelief was mixed with it. *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.* In which words, many very useful signs of true, tho' weak, faith did appear; and they are very relieving to weak believers, to consider them. O that we might find the like in us!

First, His faith gave him a tender, melting heart. *He cried out, and said with tears.* Doth your faith melt your hearts, either in a sense of your own vileness, or the riches of free grace to such vile creatures?

Secondly, His faith gave him a deep sense of his remaining unbelief, and burdened his heart with it: *Help my unbelief.* And sure so will yours, if it be but as a grain of mustard-seed in you.

Thirdly, His weak faith carried him to Christ, in fervent prayers and cries, for his help to subdue unbelief in him; and so will yours, if your faith be right. O how often do the people of God go to the throne of grace upon that errand! Help, Lord, my heart is dead, vain, and very unbelieving; there is no dealing with it in my own strength: Father, help me!

Fourthly, His weak faith made him hunger and thirst after greater measures of it: *Help my unbelief; i. e.* Lord, cure it, that I may believe with more strong and steady acts of faith; that I may not question thy power any more, or say, *If thou*

canſt do any thing? Why thus it will be with you, if you be true believers; Luke xvii. 5. "Lord, (ſaid the diſciples) in-"creaſe our faith."

Fifthly, There was a conflict in his ſoul betwixt faith and infidelity, grace and corruption; and this is very ſenſible to him; faith inclining him one way, and unbelief carrying him another: And hence he ſpeaks like a man greatly diſtreſſed, betwixt the working of contrary principles in his own ſoul (and ſo you will alſo find it in yourſelves), Gal. v. 17. "The fleſh "luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh; ſo "that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

Uſe 2. *Of conſolation.*

Well then, bleſs the Lord for the leaſt degree of ſaving faith; and be not ſo diſcouraged at its imperfections, as to overlook and ſlight the ſmalleſt working of faith in your ſouls. This poor man was deeply ſenſible of his unbelief, and yet at the ſame inſtant truly thankful for a ſmall meaſure of faith; and ſo ſhould you. For,

Firſt, The leaſt meaſure of ſaving faith, is more than all the creatures power could produce: It is the *faith of the operation of God*, Col. ii. 12. It is *the work of God, that ye believe*, John vi. 29. Yea, it is the *exceeding greatneſs of his power*, Eph. i. 19, 20. No miniſters of Chriſt, how excellent ſoever their gifts are, no duties or ordinances, no labour or diligence of your own, without this mighty power of God, can ever bring you to faith.

Secondly, It is the juſt matter of wonder and aſtoniſhment, that ever one ſpark of faith was kindled in ſuch an heart as thine is; an heart which had no prediſpoſition or inclination in the leaſt to believe: Yea, it was not *Raſa Tabula*, like clean paper, void of any impreſſion of faith, but filled with contrary impreſſions to it; ſo that it is marvellous that ever your hearts received the ſtamp or impreſſion of faith on them.

It was wonderful, that fire ſhould fall from heaven and burn upon the altar, when Elijah had laid the wood in order upon it; but much more when he poured ſo much water upon it, as not only wet all the wood, but filled the trenches, 1 Kings xviii. 33. Juſt ſo was the caſe of thy ſoul, reader, when God came to kindle faith there: Thy heart was dark and ignorant, neither acquainted with God, or thy own condition; yea, thy heart was a proud heart, full of ſelf-righteouſneſs, and ſelf-conceitedneſs, Rev. iii. 17. Rom. x. 3. A heart, that would rather venture eternal damnation, than ny ſelf, and ſubmit to Chriſt: And yet the light of the Lord

must shine into this darkness, and the pride and stiffness of thy heart must be broken, and brought to yield, or there is no believing.

Beside, How many and mighty enemies did oppose the work of faith in thy soul? Among which Satan and thy own carnal reasonings were the principal, 2 Cor. x. 4. By them, what strong-holds and fortifications were raised, to secure thee from the strokes of conviction that make way for faith. Let but the state of thine own heart, as it was by nature, be considered, and thou wilt say, it was the wonderful work of God, that ever thou wast brought in any degree to believe.

Thirdly, Though thy faith be weak, yet it is growing, if it be saving faith. The largest tree was once but a kernel, or acorn; the most famous believer, at first but a weak and doubting one: Be not discouraged therefore, God will fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness in you, and the work of faith with power. It were certainly much better for you to be blessing God for a little faith, praying for the increase of faith, and diligently attending those means by which it may be improved and made flourishing in your souls, than, by a sinful ungrateful, and prejudicial despondency, at once to dishonour God, and thus wrong yourselves.

Doct. 2. *That the remains of unbelief in gracious hearts do cost them many tears and sorrows.*

There are many things that afflict and grieve the people of God from without; but all their outward troubles are nothing to these troubles that come from within.

There are many inward troubles that make them groan, but none more than this, the unbelief they find in their own hearts. This sin justly costs them more trouble than other sins, because it is the root from which other sins do spring; a root of bitterness, bearing wormwood and gall, to the imbittering of their souls. For,

First, The remains of unbelief in the saints, greatly dishonour God; and what is a great dishonour to God, cannot but be a great grief and burden to them: For look, as faith gives God special honour above all other graces, so unbelief, in a special manner, both wrongs and grieves him above all other sins. Unbelief in dominion makes God a liar, 1 John v. 10. And even the relicts thereof in believers, do shake their assent to his truths and promises, and nourish a vile suspicion of them in the heart. And how do those base jealousies reflect upon his honour? Certainly it cannot but be a grief to a gra-

cious heart to see God dishonoured by others, Psalm cxix. 36. and a much greater to dishonour him ourselves. *Hinc illae lachrymae:* Upon this ground, we may justly cry out, and say with tears, *Lord, help our unbelief!*

Secondly, The remains of unbelief in the saints, doth not only dishonour God, but deface and spoil their best duties, in which they at any time approach unto God. Is the face of God clouded from us in prayer, hearing, or receiving? Examine the cause and reason, and you will find that cloud raised from your own unbelieving hearts. Are your affections cold, flat, and dead in duty? Dig but to the root, and you will find this sin to lie there. If the word do not work upon you as you desire and pray it might, it is because it is not mingled with faith, Heb. iv. 2. No duties, nor ordinances, no promises, can give down their sweet influences upon your souls, because of this sin. Now communion with the Lord in duties is the life of our life: These things are dearer to the saints, than their eyes. Justly therefore do they bewail and mourn over that sin, which obstructs and intercepts their sweetest enjoyments in this world.

Thirdly, The remains of unbelief give advantage and success to Satan's temptations upon us. Doth he at any time affright and scare us from our duty, or draw and entice us to the commissions of sin, or darken and cloud our condition, and fill us with inward fears and horror, without cause? All this he doth, by the mediation of our unbelief. The apostle, in Eph. vi. 16. calls faith the soul's shield against temptation: And 1 John v. 4. it is called *the victory by which we overcome: i. e.* the sword, or weapon, by which we atchieve our victories: And if so, then unbelief disarms us both of sword and shield, and leaves us naked of defence in the day of battle, a prey to the next temptation that befals us.

Fourthly, The remains of unbelief hinder the thriving of all graces; it is a worm at their root; a plant of such a malignant quality, that nothing which is spiritual can thrive under the droppings and shadow of it. It is said, Heb. iv. 2. That the gospel was preached to the Israelites, but it did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. No ordinances, nor duties, be they never so excellent, will make that soul to thrive, where unbelief prevails: You pray, you hear, you fast, you meditate; and yet you do not thrive; your spiritual food doth no good: You come from ordinances as dead, careless, and vain, as you went to them. And why is it thus, but because of remaining unbelief?

Uſe I. Let all the people of God bewail, and tenderly mourn over the remainders of infidelity in their own hearts: There, there is the root of the diſeaſe. And ſurely, reader, thy heart is not free of ſuch ſymptoms of it, as appear in other mens hearts. For do but conſider,

Symp. 1. What is our impatiency to wait for mercy, and deſpondency of ſpirit, if deliverance come not quickly in the outward, or inward ſtraits of ſoul or body, but a plain ſymptom of unbelief in our hearts? "He that believes, will not "make haſte," Iſa. xxviii. 16. He that can believe, can alſo wait God's time, Pſalm xxvii. 14.

Symp. 2. And what means our readineſs to uſe ſinful mediums, to prevent, or extricate ourſelves out of trouble, but a great deal of infidelity, lurking ſtill in our hearts? Might but faith be heard to ſpeak, it would ſay in thy heart, let me rather die ten deaths, than commit one ſin. It is ſweeter, and eaſier, to die in my integrity, than to live with a defiled, or wounded conſcience. It is nothing but our unbelief, that makes us ſo ready to put forth our hands to iniquity, when the rod of the wicked reſts long upon us, or any eminent danger threatens us, Pſalm cxxv. 3.

Symp. 3. Doth not the unbelief of your hearts ſhew itſelf in your deeper thoughtfulneſs, and great anxieties about earthly things? Matth. vi. 30. We pretend, we have truſted God with our ſouls to all eternity, and yet cannot truſt him for our daily bread. We bring the evils of to-morrow upon us to-day; and all becauſe we cannot believe more.

O reader! how much better were it to hear ſuch queſtions as theſe from thee. How ſhall I get an heart ſuitable to the mercies I do enjoy? How ſhall I duly improve them for God? "What ſhall I render to the Lord, for all his goodneſs?" This would better become thee, than to afflict thyſelf with, "What "ſhall I eat? What ſhall I drink? Or wherewithal ſhall I be "cloathed?"

Symp. 4. What doth the ſlaviſh fear of death ſpeak, but remains of unbelief ſtill in our hearts? Are there not many faintings, tremblings, deſpondences of mind, under the thoughts of death? Oh! if faith were high, thy ſpirit could not be ſo low, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 3. The more bondage of fear, the more infidelity.

Symp. 5. To conclude: What is the voice of all thoſe diſtractions of thy heart in religious duties, but want of faith, weakneſs in faith, and the actual prevalence of unbelief? You

come to God in prayer; and there a thousand vanities befet you: Your heart is carried away: it roves, it wanders to the ends of the earth. Conscience smites for this, and saith, Thou doft but mock God; thy soul will smart for this: Thou feeleft neither strength nor sweetness arising out of such duties. You enquire for remedies, and fills the ears of friends with your complaints; and, it may be, see not the root of all this to be in your own unbelief. But there it is; and till that be cured, it will not be better with you.

Use II. Yet let not poor Christians so mourn, as those that have no hope, or ground of comfort, even in this case. For,

First, Though there be remains of unbelief in you, yet you have infinite cause to bless God that they are but remains. You once were in unbelief; 1 Tim. i. 13. (*i. e.*) under the full power and dominion of it. Had God cut you off in that state, you must certainly have perished. This is the disease, but that was the death of your souls.

Secondly, Though unbelief be in you, yet it is not in you *per modum quietis*, by way of rest, as it is in all unbelievers; but by way of daily conflict, and as a burden too heavy to be borne. Now though the sin be sad, yet the sorrow for it is sweet; and your conflicts with it bring you under a very comfortable sign of grace, Rom. vii. 21.

Thirdly, This is a disease, under which all Christians do labour more or less. There is not a heart so holy in all the world, but is in some degree tainted and infected with this disease. And this hath been evident, not only in all Christians, of all sizes, but in all the acts of their faith. Job's faith triumphed in chap xiii. 15. yet had its eclipse and fainting-fit in chap. xix. 20. Abraham was a most renowned believer, a great pattern and example of faith: O how high a pitch did his faith mount to in Gen. xxii. 3.! And yet there was a time when it fainted, and failed him, as at Gerar, Gen. xx. 2, 10, 11. David in Psal. xxvii. 1, 23. was not like David in 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. The faith of Peter shone out like the sun, in a glorious confession, Matth. xvi. 16. and yet was not only beclouded, but seemed to be gone down, and quite set, in Matth. xxvi. 69. though it afterwards recovered itself.

Fourthly, It is not this, or that degree of unbelief, that damns a man, but the power and dominion of it, that damns him. Indeed, your comfort depends much upon the strength of your faith; but your salvation depends upon the truth of it. Most Christians come to heaven with a weak and doubting

faith; but few, with their ſails filled with a direct and freſh wind of aſſurance.

Fifthly, There is enough in Chriſt to help thy unbelief: *Lord*, ſaid this poor man, *help my unbelief*. He is an excellent phyſician, and knows how to relieve and cure thee: Go to him, and groan out thy complaint; tell him, thy heart is pained and troubled with this diſeaſe; thou ſhalt find him a faithful, ſkilful, and merciful Saviour.

Sixthly, It is but a little while, before this, with all other diſeaſes bred by it in thy ſoul, ſhall be perfectly healed; ſanctification is a cure begun; glorification is a cure performed and completed: The former hath deſtroyed the dominion, the latter will deſtroy the exiſtence of it in thy ſoul: When you come to heaven, and never till then, will you find yourſelves well, and at eaſe in every part.

And thus much of the ſecond point.

There are ſome general obſervations ariſing from both parts of my text conſidered together, *viz.* the thankful acknowledgment of his faith, and the ſorrowful ſenſe of his unbelief. It ſhall ſuffice, for a concluſion to this meditation, only to note them; and they are theſe;

Firſt, That the deepeſt ſenſe of ſin muſt not exclude an humble and thankful acknowledgment of the grace of God in his people. It is the fault of moſt, to hide their ſins; and the fault of ſome, to hide their graces.

Secondly, Acceptance of our perſons and duties, is a pure act of grace: There is no duty performed in a perfect act of faith; all is mixed with unbelief in ſome degree, the honey and the comb are mixed together, Cant. ii. 8. No duty as it comes from us is pure.

Thirdly, Juſtly may we ſuſpect that faith for a falſe faith, which boaſts of its own ſtrength, but never mourns in the ſenſe of unbelief. Where there are no conflicts with ſin, there can be no ſound evidence of ſincerity.

Fourthly, Believers muſt not wonder to find ſtrange viciſſitudes and alterations in the ſtate of their ſouls: Sometimes a clear, and ſometimes a cloudy day: Sometimes they have their ſongs in the night, and ſometimes their bitter lamentations. If you aſk, why is it thus? the anſwer is, there are within you contrary principles ſtruggling in your ſouls; and it is no wonder at all to find peace and trouble, hope and fear, light and darkneſs taking their turns, and ſharing your time betwixt them.

THE EIGHTH MEDITATION, UPON

PSAL. xl. 8. *I delight to do thy will O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.*

CAſting my eye upon this precious text, I find it perplexed and darkned with variety, yea, contrariety of expoſitions. The Jews and Socinians generally refer all to David, denying Chriſt to be the perſon here ſpoken of. Others refer the whole Pſalm to Chriſt; but the beſt expoſitors refer it partly to David, and partly to Chriſt, that this paragraph in which my text lies, refers to Chriſt, is plain from the apoſtle's allegation of it in Heb. x. 5, 6, 7. In this and the two former verſes there lie three great points of truth, which you may take up in this order.

Firſt, The inſufficiency and rejection of all legal ſacrifices, as things of no virtue in themſelves to ſatisfy God, or ſave men, ver. 6. *Theſe thou wouldſt not; i. e.* thou never didſt appoint them to be the means of ſalvation, farther than they ſignified and pointed at me, and now muſt vaniſh when I come in a body of fleſh; according to that, Col. ii. 17.

Secondly, The introduction of a complete and ſufficient means of redemption, ver. 7. *Lo, I come.*

Thirdly, The ſuitableneſs and agreeableneſs of this work of redemption to the heart and will of Jeſus Chriſt, ver. 8. "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my "heart;" or, as it is in the Hebrew, *in the midſt of my bowels.*

In the words we are to note two things; *viz.* 1*ſt*, The riſe and ſpring of man's redemption. 2*dly*, The acceptableneſs and ſuitableneſs of it to the heart of Chriſt.

1*ſt*, The riſe and firſt ſpring of man's redemption, the will and pleaſure of God. So it pleaſed the Lord to appoint and order it, that a remnant of poor loſt ſinners ſhould be ſaved.

The execution and accompliſhment of this good pleaſure of God, was that part which by agreement and conſent was committed to the Son, and is here called a law, or command laid upon him; and, anſwerably, the death of Chriſt is repreſented as an act of obedience, Phil. ii. 8. and reſpected God's command for it; John x. 18. "This commandment have I receiv-

"ed from my Father;" referring to the covenant of redemption which was betwixt them from everlasting: And this was the rise and first spring of our redemption by Christ.

2*dly*, You have here the gratefulness and suitableness of this work to the heart of Christ *I delight to do it; it is in my heart: Lo, I come.*

The Hebrew words note not simple consent or willingness, but the highest pleasure and complacency that can be; a work which ravishes his soul with the delights of it, *I delight to do thy will;* and that other expression, *Thy law is within my heart*, or bowels, hath as deep a sense and signification as the former; it notes the greatest care, sollicitude, and intention of mind, in keeping the most precious treasure that was committed to him! for so the phrase is used in Prov. iv. 21. and so did our Redeemer esteem and reckon this work, which was by the Father demandated and committed to him. Hence the note is,

Doct. *That the will of God to redeem sinners by the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, was most grateful and pleasing to the very heart of Christ.*

It is said, Prov. viii. 31. When he was solacing himself in the sweetest enjoyment of his Father, whilst he lay in that blessed bosom of delights, yet the very prospect of this work gave him pleasure, *Then were his delights with the sons of men.* And when he was come into the world, and had endured many abuses and injuries, and was even now come to the most difficult part of the work; yet, *how am I straitned,* or pained, (saith he) *till it be accomplished,* Luke xii. 50.

Two things call our thoughts to stay upon them in this point.

First, The decency of it, why it ought to be so.

Secondly, The reasons of it, whence it came to be so.

First, Why it ought to be a pleasant and grateful thing to Christ to take a body of flesh, and lay it down by death again for the redemption of sinners.

1. It became Christ to go about this work with chearfulness and delight, that thereby he might give his death the nature and formality of a sacrifice.

In all sacrifices you shall find that God had still a regard, a special respect, to the will of the offerer. See Exod. xxxv. 5. 21. and Lev. i. 3. the voluntariness and chearfulness with which it is given, is of great regard with God.

2. It ought to be so, in regard of the unity of Christ's will, with the Father's. The work of our redemption is called *the*

pleasure of the Lord, Isa. liii. 10. and what was the Father's pleasure, could not be displeasing to him who is one with the Father. It is impossible their wills can clash, whose nature is one.

3. This was necessary to magnify and commend the love of Jesus Christ to us, for whom he gave himself. That he came into the world to die for us, is a mercy of the first magnitude, but that he came in love to our souls, and underwent all his sufferings with such willingness for our sakes, this heightens it above all apprehension. O, this is the most taking, the most ravishing, the most astonishing consideration of all: "He loved "me, and gave himself for me," Gal. ii. 20. "He loved us, "and washed us from our sins in his own blood," Rev. i. 5. Here love is in its highest exaltation.

4. It was necessary to be so, for the regulating of all our obedience to God according to this pattern, that seeing and setting this great example of obedience before us, we might never grudge nor grumble at any duty or suffering that God should call us to; "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; "how, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became "poor," saith the apostle, when he would press the Corinthians to their duty, 2 Cor. viii. 9. And when he would effectually urge the Philippians to their duty, this is the argument, "Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus," Phil. ii. 5. So that it became and behoved Christ thus to undertake this great service.

Secondly, Next let us consider and examine whence it came to be so pleasant and acceptable to Jesus Christ, to come into the world and die for poor sinners.

And we shall find although the sufferings of Christ were exceeding sharp, and the cup of God's wrath unspeakably bitter, yet that which made it pleasant and desirable to Jesus Christ, was the prospect he had of the sweet results and issues of his sufferings, Isa. liii 10, 11. "He shall see of the travail of his "soul and shall be satisfied," (*i. e.*) he shall have great content and pleasure from the issues and fruits of his sufferings, as Psal. cxxviii. 2. "Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands," (*i. e.*) the fruit of thy labours. So here, "He shall see the "travail of his soul," (*i. e.*) the fruit and effects of his travail; and to see this shall be to him the reward and recompence of all his sufferings. Now, among the sweet results of the sufferings of Christ there are especially these three, which he foresaw with singular content and delectation.

First, That in his sufferings there would be made a glorious

display and manifestation of the divine attributes; yea, such a glorious display of them, as was never made before to angels or to men, nor ever shall be any more in this world. For though,

1. The wisdom of God had made itself visible to men in the creation of the world, yet there it shone but in a faint and languishing beam, compared with this. Here divine wisdom put itself as it were into a visible form, and represented itself to the life. See 1 Cor. i. 24. and Eph. iii. 10. Behold, in the death of Christ, the wisdom of God in its highest exaltation and glory: O the manifold wisdom of God! O the depth of his unsearchable wisdom! which I touched in some particulars before.

Behold here the wisdom of God, raising more glory to himself by occasion of the breach of the law, than could ever have risen to him from the most punctual observation of its commands, or the most rigorous execution of its threatenings; from the occasion of the fall, which was our undoing, raising us to a far better estate, and with a much better security to enjoy it, than that from which we fell. Yea, behold and wonder, God by the death of Christ recovering his elect from all the danger and mischief of sin, and yet making the way and manner of their recovery the fairest glass to represent the horror and evil of sin to them, that ever was shewn them in this world. Oh, the triumph of divine wisdom!

2. Though the love of God had appeared before in our creation, protection, and provision, yet nothing to what it doth in our redemption by the death of Christ. Lo, here is the love of God in its strength and glory, 1 John iv. 10. "Herein is "love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent "his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." *Herein is love, i. e.* Here is the highest expression of God's love to the creature; not only that ever was, but that ever can be made; for in love only God acted to the uttermost; whatever his power hath done, it can do more; but for his love, it can go no higher, he hath no greater thing to give than his Christ. It is true, in giving us a being, and that in the noblest rank and order of creatures on earth, herein was love. In feeding us all our life long by his assiduous tender providence, herein is love. In protecting us under his wings from innumerable dangers and mischiefs, herein is love: much love; and yet set all this by his redeeming love in Christ, and it seems nothing. When we have said all, "herein is the love of God, that he sent his Son," *&c.*

This was free love to undeſerving, to ill-deſerving ſinners: preventing love; not that we loved him, but that he loved us. Juſt as an image in the glaſs, ſaith Ficinus, that is imprinted there by the face looking into it; the image does not look back upon the face, except the face look forward upon the image; and in that the image does ſeem to ſee the face, it is nothing elſe but that the face does ſee the image. O the inexpreſſible glory of the love of God in Chriſt!

3. Though God had given ſeveral ſad marks of his juſtice before, both upon the angels that fell, clapping upon them the chains of darkneſs; in the overthrow of Sodom and the neighbouring cities, turning them to aſhes, as you may read in Jude, ver. 6, 7. yet never was the exactneſs and ſeverity of juſtice ſo manifeſted before, nor ever ſhall be any more, as it was at the death of Chriſt. Chriſt did not only ſatisfy it fully, but he alſo honoured it highly, making that attribute which was once a bar, now to be a bottom of our peace, Rom. iii. 25. Never did ſuch a perſon as Chriſt ſtand at the bar of juſtice before: the blood of God was poured out to appeaſe and ſatisfy it. When Chriſt ſuffered, he did both give and take ſatisfaction; he gave it to the juſtice of God in dying; he took it, in ſeeing juſtice ſo honoured in his death.

Secondly, Another delightful proſpect Chriſt had of the fruit of his ſufferings, was the recovery and ſalvation of all the elect by his death; and though his ſufferings were exceeding bitter, yet ſuch fruit of them as this was exceeding ſweet: upon this account he aſſumed his name Jeſus, Matth. i. 21. yea, and his human nature alſo, Gal. iv. 4, 5. Souls are of great value in his eyes; one ſoul is of more worth in his account than all the world, Mark viii. 36. What a pleaſure then muſt it be to him, to ſave ſo many ſouls from the everlaſting wrath of the great and terrible God! Add to this,

Thirdly, The glory which would redound to him from his redeemed ones to all eternity; for it will be the everlaſting pleaſant employment of the ſaints in heaven, to be aſcribing glory, praiſe, and honour, to the Redeemer: "To him that loved us, "and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and hath made "us kings and prieſts to God and his Father; to him be glory "and dominion for ever and ever," Rev. i. 5, 6. The improvement of all this will be in a word or two.

Uſe 1. for conviction.

This truth then, in the firſt place, may convince, ſhame, and humble the very beſt of Chriſtians, who find ſo little delight in the moſt eaſy, ſweet, and ſpiritual duties of obedience, when

Chriſt undertook and went through the moſt difficult task for them with ſuch chearfulneſs and readineſs. "Lo, I come, thy "law is in my heart, I delight to do thy will;" and yet the work he ſo applied himſelf to, was a work full of difficulty, attended with reproach and ſhame, as well as anguiſh and pain.

Did Chriſt find pleaſure in abaſement and torment, in ſuffering and dying for me, and can I find no pleaſure in praying, hearing, meditating, and enjoying the ſweet duties of communion with him? Did he come ſo chearfully to die for me, and do I go ſo dead-heartedly to prayers and ſacraments, to enjoy fellowſhip with him? Was it a pleaſure to him to ſhed his blood, and is it none to me to apply it, and reap the benefits of it? Oh, Lord, what an heart have I? How unſuitable is this frame of heart to the nature of God, whoſe eſſential excellencies make him the ſupreme delight, the ſweet repoſe, ſolace, and reſt of ſouls! Pſal. xvi. 11.

How unſuitable to the principles of regeneration and holineſs, purpoſely planted in the ſoul, to make ſpiritual performances a pleaſure to it!

How unſuitable to the future expected ſtate of glory, which brings the ſanctified ſoul to a ſweet complacential reſt and ſatisfaction in God! In a word, how unſuitable is this temper of ſpirit to the heart of Jeſus Chriſt! O, methinks I hear Chriſt thus expoſtulating with me this day:

Is this thy zeal and delight in the duties of obedience? Is it rather the awe of conſcience than the pleaſure of communion that brings thee to this duty? Doth thy hard heart need ſo many arguments to perſuade it, even to the ſweeteſt, eaſieſt, and moſt pleaſant duties in religion? Well, I did not love thee at that rate; my heart readily echoed to the Father's call, to die for thee, to drink the very dregs of the cup of trembling for thee: "I come, I come, I delight to do thy will, thy law is in "the midſt of my bowels."

2. *Uſe, of exhortation.*

If it be ſo, how great a motive have the people of God before them, to make them apply themſelves with all chearfulneſs and readineſs of mind to all the duties of active and paſſive obedience! O, let there be no more grumblings, lazy excuſes, ſhiftings of duty, or dead-hearted and liſtleſs performances of them, after ſuch an example as this. Be ready to do the will of God; yea, be ye alſo ready to ſuffer it. Let the ſame mind be in you, which alſo was in Chriſt Jeſus. The more pleaſure and delight you find in doing or ſuffering the will of God, the

more of Christ's spirit is in you, and the more of his image is upon you. Are not all holy duties expressed in scripture by the saints walking with God? Gen. xvii. 1. And is not this an angelical life? Can it be a burden to the ear to hear sweet ravishing strains of melody; or to the eye, to behold variety of pleasant and lively colours; or to the palate, to relish the delicious sweetness of meats and drinks?

Oh, reader, were thy heart more spiritual, more deeply sanctified, and heavenly, it would be no more pain to thee to pray, hear, or meditate on the things of God, than it is to a bird to carry and use his own wings; or to a man, to eat the most pleasant food when he is an hungry; "I have rejoiced, (saith David) "in the way of thy commandments, as much as in all riches," Psal. cxix. 14.

And as to sufferings for Christ, they should not be grievous to Christians, that know how chearfully Christ came from the bosom of the Father to die for them. What have we to leave or lose, in comparison with him? What are our sufferings to Christ's? Alas, there is no compare; there was more bitterness in one drop of his sufferings, than in a sea of ours.

To conclude, Your delight and readiness in the paths of obedience, is the very measure of your sanctification.

THE NINTH

MEDITATION,

UPON

ZECH. xii. part of ver. 10. *And they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son; and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.*

THIS promise is confessed to have a special respect to the Jews conversion to Christ: It was in part accomplished in the apostle's days, Acts ii. 37. yet that was but a specimen or handsel, of what shall be, when the body of that nation shall be called.

But yet it cannot be denied, that all Christians find the same piercing sorrows, and wounding sense of sin, when God awakens them by convictions, and brings them to see the evil of sin, and

the grace of Chriſt, that is here expreſſed concerning them at their converſion.

The words preſent us with three very remarkable particulars in evangelical repentance; *viz.*

Firſt, The ſpring and principle of it.

Secondly, The effects and fruits of it.

Thirdly, The depth and meaſure of it.

Firſt, The ſpring and principle of repentance, expreſſed in theſe words, *They ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced.* This looking upon Chriſt, is an act of faith; for ſo it is deſcribed in ſcripture, John vi. 40. Iſa. xlv. 22. and it reſpects Chriſt crucified, as its proper object: Yea, and that by them, not only as their progenitors involved them in that guilt, by entailing it on them, but as their own ſins were the meritorious cauſe of his *death* and *ſufferings*; *they ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced.*

Secondly, The effects and fruits of ſuch an aſpect of faith upon Chriſt, is here alſo noted; *They ſhall mourn, and be in bitterneſs*: *i. e.* it ſhall melt and thaw them into godly ſorrow; it ſhall break their hard and ſtony hearts to pieces: The eye of faith ſhall affect their hearts. For indeed, evangelical ſorrows are hearty and undiſſembled tears, dropping out of the eye of faith.

Thirdly, and *laſtly*, The depth and meaſure of their ſorrow is here likewiſe noted. And it is compared with the greateſt and moſt piercing ſorrows men are acquainted with in this world, even the ſorrow of a tender-hearted Father, mourning over a dead ſon, yea, an only ſon, and his firſt-born; than which, no earthly ſorrow is more penetrating and ſharp; Jer. vi. 26. Hence the note will be,

Doct. *That the ſufferings of Chriſt are exceeding powerful, to melt believers hearts into godly ſorrow.*

The eye of faith is a precious eye; and according to its various aſpects upon Chriſt, it produceth various effects upon the hearts of men. Eying Chriſt as our complete righteouſneſs; ſo it pacifies and quiets the heart: Eying him as our pattern; ſo it directs and regulates our actions: Eying him as a ſacrifice offered up to divine juſtice for our ſins; ſo it powerfully thaws the heart, and melts the affections.

By meltings, I do not only underſtand tears; as if they only were expreſſive of all ſpiritual ſorrow: For it is poſſible, the waters of ſorrow may run deep in the heart, when the eye cannot yield a drop.

1. There be two things in repentance; trouble and tears. The

firſt is eſſential, the laſt contingent. The firſt flows from the influence of faith upon the ſoul; the laſt much depends upon the temper and conſtitution of the body. It is a mercy, when our tears can flow from an heart filled with ſorrow for ſin, and love to Chriſt; yet it often falls out, that there is an heavy heart, where the eyes are dry. But that there is efficacy in faith to melt the heart, by looking upon the ſufferings of Chriſt for ſin, is undoubted: And how it becomes ſo powerful an inſtrument to this end, I will ſhew you in the following particulars.

Firſt, Faith eyes the dignity of the perſon of Chriſt, who was pierced for us; how excellent and glorious a perſon he is. In the captivity, it was for a lamentation, that "princes were "hanged up by the hands, and the faces of elders were not "honoured," Lam. v. 12. We read alſo the lamentation of David, 2 Sam. iii. 38. as he followed Abner's hearſe, "A "prince, and a great man, is fallen in Iſrael to-day."

But what was Abner, and what were the princes of Iſrael to the Son of God? Lo, here, by faith, the believer ſees the Prince of the kings of the earth, the only begotten of the Father, equal to God, in nature and dignity, He, whom all the angels worſhip, hanging dead upon the curſed tree. Faith ſees royal blood, the blood of God, poured out by the ſword of juſtice, for ſatisfaction and reconciliation; and this cannot but deeply affect the believing ſoul.

Secondly, Faith repreſents the ſeverity of divine juſtice to Jeſus Chriſt, and the extremity of his ſufferings; and this ſight is a melting ſight.

The apoſtle tells us, Gal. iii. 13. he was made κατάρα, a curſe and execration for us. It relates to the kind and manner of his death upon the croſs, which was the death of a ſlave; *ſervile ſupplicium*: A freeman was privileged from that puniſhment. It looks upon, and well conſiders the ſad plight and condition Chriſt was in, in the days of his humiliation for us. It is ſaid of him, Matth. xxvi. 28. He was περίλυπος, *undequaque triſtis*, ſurrounded with griefs; exactly anſwerable to his name, Iſa. liii. 3. *a man of ſorrows*. Let him look which way he would, outward or inward, upward or downward, to friends or enemies; he could behold nothing but ſorrow, and what might increaſe his miſery. Another *evangeliſt* ſaith, he was *ſore amazed*; Mark xiv. 33. ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι: It notes ſuch a conſternation, as makes the hair of the head ſtand upright; *Horrilatio*. A third tells us, his *ſoul was troubled*, John xii. 27. ψυχή μου τεταρακται, *unde tartarus*, a word from whence hell is

derived; and denoting the anguish and troubles of them that are in that place of torments.

And the fourth tells us, he was in an agony; Luke xxiii. 44. all expressing, in several emphatical notions and metaphors, the extremity of Christ's anguish and torment. This cannot but greatly affect and break the believer's heart.

Thirdly, But then that which most affects the heart, is Christ's undergoing all this, not only in love to us, but in our room and stead. He suffered not for any evil he had done, for there was no guile found in his mouth, Isa. liii. 4, 5. But the just suffered for the unjust, 1 Pet. iii. 18. It was for me, a vile, wretched, worthless sinner. It was my pride, my earthliness, the hardness of my heart, the corruption of my nature, the innumerable evils of my life, that brought him down to the dust of death; "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin," 2 Cor. v. 21.

Who can believingly eye Christ, as suffering such pains, such wrath, such a curse, in the room of such a sinner, such a rebel, so undeserving, and so ill-deserving a creature, and not mourn as for an only son, and be in bitterness as for a first-born?

Fourthly, Faith melts the heart, by considering the effects and fruits of the sufferings of Christ, what great things he hath purchased by his stripes and blood for poor sinners; a full and final pardon of sin, a well-settled peace with God, a sure title and right to the eternal inheritance; and all this for thee, a law-condemned, a self-condemned sinner. Lord, what am I, that such mercies as these should be purchased by such a price for me? For me, when thousands and ten thousands of sweeter dispositions must burn in hell for ever! Oh, what manner of love is this!

Fifthly, Faith melts the heart, by exerting a threefold act upon Christ crucified:

1*st*, A realizing act, representing all this in the greatest certainty and evidence that can be. These are no devised fables, but the sure and infallible reports of the gospel.

2*dly*, An applying act; "He loved me, and gave himself for "me," Gal. iii. 20. "He loved us, and washed us from our "sins in his own blood," Rev. i. 5.

3*dly*, and *lastly*, By an inferring or reasoning act. If Christ died for me, then I shall never die: If his blood were paid down for me, then my sins, which are many, are forgiven me: If he was condemned in my room, I am acquitted, and shall

be ſaved from wrath to come, through him. O how weighty do theſe thoughts prove to believing ſouls!

1. *Uſe, for information.*

Then ſure there is but little faith, becauſe there is ſo much deadneſs and unaffectedneſs among profeſſors. A believing ſight of Chriſt will work upon a gracious heart, as a dead ſon, a beloved and only ſon, uſes to do upon a tender father's heart.

Reader, was it ever thy ſad lot to look upon ſuch an heart-rending object? Didſt thou ever feel the pangs and commotions in thy bowels that ſome have felt upon ſuch a ſight? Why, ſo will thy heart work towards Chriſt, if ever thou believingly lookeſt on him whom thou haſt pierced.

Infer. 2. *Then the acting and exerciſing of faith is the beſt expedient to get a tender heart, and raiſe the dead affections.*

We are generally full of complaints how hard, how dead and ſtupid our hearts are; we are often putting caſes as theſe, how ſhall I get a broken heart for ſin: How ſhall I raiſe my dead heart in duty? Why this is the way, no expedient in all the world like this; look upon him whom thou haſt pierced; it is the melting argument.

2. *Uſe, of examination.*

But that which I eſpecially aim at in this point, is for the trial and examination of thy heart, reader, in the point of true evangelical repentance, which is thy proper buſineſs at this time; and I will go no further than the text for rules to examine and try it by.

Rule 1. All evangelical repentance hath a ſupernatural ſpring, "I will pour out the Spirit of grace, and they ſhall mourn." Till the Spirit be poured out upon us, it is as eaſy to preſs water out of a rock, as to make our hearts relent and mourn. There are indeed natural meltings, the effects of an ingenuous temper, but theſe differ in kind and nature from godly ſorrow.

Rule 2. Godly ſorrows are real, ſincere, and undiſſembled; "they ſhall mourn, as for an only ſon."

Parents need not any natural helps to draw tears on ſuch accounts; O! their very hearts are pierced, they could even die with them; ſighs, groans, and tears, are not hanged out as falſe ſigns of what is not to be found in their hearts.

Rule 3. Evangelical ſorrow is very deep; ſo much the mourning for an only ſon, a firſt-born, muſt import. Theſe waters, how ſtill ſoever they be, run deep, very deep, in the bottom channel of the ſoul. See Acts ii. 37. *They were cut to the heart.*

Rule 4. Faith is the inſtrument employed in breaking the heart; "they ſhall look, and mourn." This is the burning-glaſs that contracts the beams, and fires the affections.

Rule 5. Laſtly, The wrong ſin hath done to God, and the ſufferings it hath brought Chriſt under, are the piercing and heart-wounding conſiderations: "They ſhall look upon me, "whom they have pierced, and mourn." The piercing of Chriſt by our ſin, is that which muſt pierce thy ſoul with ſorrow.

THE TENTH MEDITATION, UPON.

JOHN vi. 55. *For my fleſh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*

IN the context our Lord Jeſus Chriſt makes a moſt ſpiritual and excellent diſcourſe to the Jews, about the nature and neceſſity of faith in him; taking the occaſion thereof from the bread, which a little before he had ſo miraculouſly multiplied and fed them with: raiſing up their minds to more ſublime and ſpiritual things, and letting them know that bread, how ſweet ſoever it was, was but a ſhadow of himſelf, infinitely more ſweet and neceſſary.

Theſe words are a propoſition, in which are theſe three things obſervable:

Firſt, The ſubject; my fleſh and my blood.

Secondly, The predicate; it is meat and drink.

Thirdly, The manner of predication; it is meat indeed, and drink indeed.

Firſt, The ſubject; my fleſh and my blood, *i.e.* my humanity; this is meat and drink, true ſpiritual food. If it be demanded, why he had not ſaid, I am meat and drink indeed; but rather chuſes to ſay, my fleſh and blood is ſo? The reaſon is evident, ſaith learned Camero; becauſe if you take away fleſh and blood from Chriſt, he cannot be food or life to us: for, in order to his being ſo, he muſt ſatisfy God for us, and obtain the remiſſion of our ſins; but without ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion. Now, foraſmuch as by the offering up

of his body, and ſhedding of his blood, he hath obtained pardon and life for us; therefore his fleſh and his blood, is called our meat and our drink, that by which our ſouls live. Which brings us to the ſecond thing:

Secondly, The predicate; it is meat and drink: *i. e.* It is to our ſouls of the ſame uſe and neceſſity, that meat and drink are to our natural life, which cannot be ſuſtained, or continued without them.

The life of our ſouls as neceſſarily depends upon the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, as our natural life doth upon meat and drink. Yet beware of a miſtake here: the fleſh and blood, or the humanity of Chriſt, is not the fountain of our ſpiritual life, but the channel rather through which it flows to us from his divinity. By reaſon of his incarnation and death, righteouſneſs and life came to us.

Thirdly, The manner of predication is very emphatical; it is "meat indeed, and drink indeed." Which notes two things:

Firſt, *Reality*, in oppoſition to all legal ſhadows and types.

Secondly, *Tranſcendent excellency*, far ſurpaſſing all other food, even manna itſelf, which, for its excellency, is ſtiled *angels food*. "My fleſh is meat indeed," *i. e.* true, ſubſtantial, and real food to ſouls, and choice, excellent, and incomparable food. Hence obſerve,

Doct. *That what meat and drink is to our bodies, that, and much more than that, the fleſh and blood of Chriſt is to believing ſouls.*

Two things require explication in this point. *Firſt*, Wherein the reſemblance, or agreement lies, betwixt the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, and meat and drink? *Secondly*, Wherein the former tranſcends and excels the latter?

1. *Query*. Wherein lies the reſemblance and agreement between the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, and material meat and drink?

Sol. The agreement is manifeſt in the following particulars.

Firſt, Meat and drink is neceſſary to ſupport natural life; we cannot live without it. Upon this account, bread is called the ſtaff and ſtay; *i. e.* the ſupport of the natural ſpirits, which do as much lean and depend upon it, as a feeble man doth upon his ſtaff; Iſa. iii. 1. But yet how neceſſary ſoever it be, the fleſh and blood of Chriſt is more indiſpenſibly neceſſary for the life of our ſouls; John vi. 53. "Except ye eat the "fleſh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no "life in you." Our ſouls have more abſolute need of peace and pardon by Chriſt, than our bodies have of meat and drink.

Better our bodies were ſtarved and famiſhed, than our ſouls damned and loſt for ever.

Secondly, Meat and drink are ever moſt ſweet and deſirable, to thoſe that are hungry and thirſty. It is hunger and thirſt, that gives value and eſtimation to meat and drink; Prov. xxvii. 7. "To the hungry ſoul, every bitter thing is ſweet;" and ſo it is in our eſteem of Chriſt; John vii. 37. "If any man "thirſt, let him come to me, and drink." When God, by illumination and conviction, makes men deeply ſenſible of their miſerable, loſt, and periſhing condition: then ten thouſand worlds for Chriſt. All is but dung and droſs, in compariſon of the excellency of Chriſt Jeſus.

Thirdly, Meat and drink muſt undergo an alteration, and loſe its own form, before it actually nouriſhes the body. The corn is ground to pieces in the mill, before it be made bread to nouriſh us. And Chriſt muſt be ground betwixt the upper and nether milſtone of the wrath of God, and malice of men, to be made bread for our ſouls. The prophet ſaith, Iſa. lii. 14. *His viſage is marred more than any man's.* He did not look like himſelf, the beauty and glory of heaven; but the reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people. Oh what an alteration did his incarnation and ſufferings make upon him! Phil. ii. 6, 7. *Quantum mutatus ab illo!*

Fourthly, Natural food muſt be received into our bodies, and have a natural union with them; and Chriſt muſt be received into our ſouls, and have a ſpiritual union with them by faith; or elſe we can have no nouriſhment, or benefit by him. An empty profeſſion, a mere talkative religion, nouriſhes the inner man, juſt as much as the ſight of meat, and our commending of it, doth our outward man. It is *Chriſt*'s dwelling in our hearts by faith, Eph. iii. 17. our receiving of him, John i. 12. our eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood, John vi. 53. *i. e.* The effectual application of Chriſt to our ſouls by faith, that makes us partakers of his benefits.

Fifthly, Meat and drink muſt be taken every day, or elſe natural life will languiſh; and ſpiritual life will never be comfortably maintained in us, without daily communion with Jeſus Chriſt. If a gracious ſoul neglect, or be interrupted in its courſe of duties, and ſtated times of prayer; it will be quickly diſcernible by the Chriſtian himſelf, in the deadneſs of his own heart; and by others alſo, in the barrenneſs of his diſcourſes. And in theſe things ſtand the analogy, and agreement of the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, with meat and drink.

2. *Query.* The next thing is to open the tranſcendent excellency of *Chriſt's fleſh and blood*, above all other food in the world. And this appears in four particulars.

Firſt, This fleſh and blood was aſſumed into the neareſt union with the ſecond perſon in the bleſſed Trinity, and ſo is not only dignified above all other created beings, but becomes the firſt receptacle of all grace, intended to be communicated through it to the children of men; John i. 14.

Secondly, This fleſh and blood of Chriſt was offered up to God, as the great ſacrifice for our ſins, and purchaſe of our peace; Col. i. 20. Eph. v. 2. and ſo it is of ineſtimable price and value to believers. The human nature of Chriſt was the ſacrifice, the divine nature was the altar on which it was offered up, and by which it was dignified and ſanctified, and made an offering of a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to God, Eph. v. 2.

Thirdly, This fleſh and blood of Chriſt, is the great *medium* of conveyance of all bleſſings and mercies to the ſouls and bodies of believers. It lies as a vaſt pipe at the fountain-head of bleſſings, receiving and conveying them from God to men; Col. i. 14, 19.

So then, it being united to the ſecond perſon, and ſo become the fleſh and blood of God; it being the ſacrifice offered up to God for atonement and remiſſion of ſins, and the medium of conveying all grace and mercy from God the fountain, to the ſouls and bodies of believers; how ſweet a reliſh muſt it have upon the palate of faith? Here faith may taſte the ſweetneſs of a pardon; a full, free, and final pardon of ſin; than which nothing in this world can be ſweeter to a ſin-burdened conſcience.

Here it taſtes the incomparable ſweetneſs of peace with God, *a peace which paſſeth underſtanding*: The breach ſin made, is by this ſacrifice made up for ever; Col. i. 20.

Here it taſtes the inexpreſſible ſweetneſs of acceptation with God, and an intereſt in his favour; a mercy, which a poor convinced ſoul would give ten thouſand worlds for, were it to be purchaſed. Yea, here it reliſheth all the ſweet promiſes in the covenant of grace, as confirmed and ratified by this ſacrifice; Heb. ix. 5. So that well might he ſay, "My fleſh is meat "indeed, and my blood is drink indeed;" the moſt excellent New Teſtament food for believers:

I. *Uſe, of information.*

Firſt, See here the love of a Saviour, that heavenly *pelican*, who feeds us with his own fleſh and blood. You read, Lam. iv. 10. of pitiful women, who eat the fleſh of their own chil-

dren; but where have you read of men or women, that gave their own flesh and blood, for meat and drink to their children? Think on this, you that are so loth to cross and deny your flesh for Christ: He suffered his flesh to be rent, and his blood set abroach for you: What love like the love of Christ!

Secondly, Learn hence a ground of content, in the lowest and poorest condition allotted to any believer in this world. It may be some of you live low in the world; you have hard fare, and are abridged of many of those sweet comforts in the creature, which the enemies of God abound in: But still remember you have no cause to envy their dainties, and be dissatisfied with your own lot and portion; when not many nobles, or mighty in the world, feed as your souls do feed. O what a feast have you! What dainties do your souls taste by faith; whilst others do but feed upon ashes and husks? What is the flesh of lambs and calves out of the stall, to the flesh of Christ? Amos vi. 4, 5, 6. What is wine in bowls, and the chief ointment, to the blood of Christ, and the anointings of his Spirit? O be satisfied with your outward lot, however God hath cast it, whilst he hath dealt so bountifully with your souls.

Thirdly, Learn hence the necessity of faith, in order to the livelihood and subsistance of our souls. What is a feast to him that cannot taste it? And what is Christ to him that cannot believe? That cannot, by faith, eat his flesh, and drink his blood?

It is not the preparation made for souls in Christ, but the application of him by faith, that gives us the sweetness and benefit of him. Faith is the soul's mouth, or palate: The unbeliever tastes no sweetness in Christ; he can relish more sweetness in money, meat, drink, carnal mirth, or any sensual enjoyment than in Christ.

Fourthly, How excellent are gospel ordinances? What sweetness is there to be found in them by true believers? For there Christ is prepared, and, as it were, served in for them to feed upon. It is your minister's work, to prepare for you all the week long, and to furnish for you *a feast of fat things*. Lo here is a table spread and furnished this day, with the costliest dainties that heaven affords? O prize these mercies: sit not here with flat, or wanton appetites, lest God call to your enemies, and bid them away.

II. *Uſe, of exhortation.*

Is the fleſh and blood of Chriſt meat and drink indeed? Then let me exhort you, brethren,

Firſt, To come to this table with ſharp and hungry appetites. Have you ever *taſted, That the Lord is gracious?* And do you not hunger and thirſt, to *taſte* it again? Surely, "Where the carcaſe is, thither will the eagles be gathered;" Matth. xxiv. 28. There is a two fold appetite; a dainty, and an hungry appetite. Beware of a nice and dainty appetite, that can reliſh nothing in the moſt ſolid and ſpiritual duties, except the diſh be garniſhed with flowers of rhetoric, or the matter ſerved in with art and elegancy. This hath been the great ſin of the profeſſors of this generation. O Chriſtians! no more of that I pray you. Were you really an hungred and athirſt for Chriſt, you would come to his ordinances, as famiſhing men to a feaſt.

Secondly, To feed heartily upon Chriſt, in every ordinance, and in every ſacrament eſpecially. O that your ſouls might hear, and anſwer that invitation this day! Cant. v. 1. "Eat, O "friends: drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

For motives, I will only hint theſe three following.

Firſt, Chriſt is the matter of the feaſt. God hath prepared him for your ſouls. Is any thing in heaven or earth ſo ſweet, as Chriſt ſacrificed is? Do not the angels and ſaints in heaven feaſt upon him? Surely one drop of Chriſt's blood hath more ſweetneſs and excellency in it, than the whole ocean of all creature-comforts.

Secondly, Do not your graces need it? Have you not a languiſhing love, a ſtaggering faith, dull and ſluggiſh deſires? Look into your hearts, and ſee what need there is of *ſtrengthening the things that are in you, which are ready to die.* O feed upon Chriſt, that your graces may be revived and ſtrengthened.

Thirdly, Do you know how many days you are to go in the ſtrength of this meal? How long it may be, ere you ſit again at the Lord's table? Surely, even theſe, as well as your inferior temporal comforts, ſtand upon terms of greateſt uncertainty. Ah Chriſtians! conſider well the times you live in, the enemy that ſtands ready to take away the cloth, and remove your ſpiritual food from you. It is ſaid of Peter Martyr, that being in Oxford when queen Mary came in, and hearing the firſt maſs-bell ring; he was ſtruck to the heart, and ſaid, *Haec una notula omnem meam doctrinam evertit:* This one tinkling bell overthrows all the labours of my miniſtry at once.

God grant that we may hear none of that muſic in England any more: but it is like to be, according to your eſtimation and improvement of Chriſt's precious ordinances.

Thirdly, *Commend the experienced ſweetneſs of Chriſt to others.* Do not conceal his lovelineſs and excellency. Thus the fair and enamoured ſpouſe charges, or adjures others; Cant. v. 9. Be not content to feaſt upon Chriſt alone, whilſt other ſouls are ſtarving, and perhaps the ſouls of your dear natural relations. Say to them, as David, Pſal. xxxiv. 8. "O taſte and "ſee how good the Lord is."

Fourthly, and laſtly, *See that your appetite to Chriſt be right, and truly ſpiritual.* Such an hunger and thirſt, upon which bleſſedneſs is entailed by promiſe. And you may conclude it ſo, when,

Firſt, It is a ſharp and ſtrong appetite, Pſal. xlii. 1. Let your thoughts run upon Chriſt night and day; even continually.

Secondly, When it is an univerſal appetite, after every thing in Chriſt; his holineſs, as well as his righteouſneſs; his commands, as well as his promiſes; for *he is altogether lovely*, Cant. v. 16.

Thirdly, When it is a continued appetite. I mean not, that the pulſe of your deſires ſhould keep an even ſtroke at all times, but that there be real and ſincere workings of heart after him always; Pſal. cxix. 20.

Fourthly, When it is an induſtrious appetite, awakening the ſoul to the uſe of all means, and practice of all duties, in order to ſatisfaction; Pſal. xxvii. 4. "One thing have I deſired of "the Lord, and that will I ſeek after."

Fifthly, and *laſtly*, It is then a right, when it is an inſatiable appetite, never to be allayed with any thing beſide Chriſt; Pſal. lxxiii. 25. no, nor with Chriſt himſelf, till thou comeſt to the full enjoyment of him in heaven. The believer knows, how ſweet ſoever his communion with Chriſt is in this world, yet that communion he ſhall have with Chriſt in heaven, will far excel it: there it will be more intimate and immediate, 1 Cor xii. 12. more full and perfect, even to ſatisfaction, Pſal. xvii. 15. more conſtant and continued, not ſuffering ſuch interruptions as it doth here, Rev. xxi. 25. more pure and unmixed; here our corruptions work with our graces, Rom. vii. 21. but there grace ſhall work alone: in a word, more durable and perpetual; we ſhall *be ever with the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. iv. 7. Long therefore to *drink that new wine* in the *Father's kingdom*. "The "Spirit and the bride ſay, Come; and let him that heareth, "ſay, Come. Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus; come quickly."

THE ELEVENTH MEDITATION, UPON

CANT. viii. 6. *Set me as a ſeal upon thy heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm: for love is ſtrong as death; jealouſy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a moſt vehement flame.*

THIS book is a ſacred allegory; the ſenſe thereof is deep and ſpiritual. Our unacquaintedneſs with ſuch ſchemes and figures of ſpeech, together with the want of ſpiritual light and experience, makes it difficult to be underſtood; but the allegory being once unfolded, by reaſon of its affinity with the fancy, truth is more eaſily and affectingly tranſmitted, both to the mind and heart.

St. Auguſtin aſſigns this reaſon, why we are ſo much delighted with metaphors and allegories; becauſe they are ſo much proportioned to our ſenſes, with which our reaſon hath contracted an intimacy and familiarity; and therefore God, to accommodate his truth to our capacity, doth, as it were, embody it in earthly expreſſions; according to that of the ancient Cabbaliſts, *Lumen ſupremum nunquam deſcendit ſine idumento*; heavenly truth never deſcendeth to us without its veil and covering.

The words before us, are the requeſt of the ſpouſe to Jeſus Chriſt; and conſiſt of two parts, *viz.*

1. Her ſuit; which is earneſt.
2. Her argument; which is weighty.

1. Her earneſt ſuit, or requeſt to Jeſus Chriſt; "Set me as "a ſeal upon thy heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm." The heart of Chriſt notes his moſt dear, inward, and tender affection; his arm notes his protecting and preſerving care and power. The laſt naturally follows the firſt; what men dearly affect, they tenderly and carefully protect. And by *ſetting her as a ſeal upon his heart and arm*, ſhe means a ſure and a well-confirmed intereſt, both in his love and power; this ſhe would have firmly ſealed and ratified: and that this is her meaning, will plainly appear from,

The argument with which ſhe enforces her requeſt: "For "love is ſtrong as death; jealouſy is cruel as the grave," *&c.*

By jealouſy, we muſt underſtand her fears and ſuſpicions of coming ſhort of Chriſt and his love; *q. d.* What if after all I

should be deceived? What if Jesus Christ do not love me with a special love? O these fears and suspicions are intolerable torments to her; she cannot bear them: they are cruel as the grave; insufferable as coals of fire, which have a most vehement flame; *q. d.* Lord, if thou leave me in the midst of these jealousies of thy love, I shall be but a torment to myself; I shall live as one upon the rack, or in the flames. Hence the note is,

Doct. *That there is nothing in this world, which true Christians more earnestly desire, than to be well assured and satisfied of the love of Jesus Christ to their souls.*

In the meditation of this point, two things must be enquired into:

1. Why this assurance is so desirable.
2. How it may be obtained.

1. Why the assurance of the love of Christ is so desirable in the eyes of true Christians. And among others, there are two things that especially make it so; *viz.*

1. The sweetness of its enjoyment.
2. The difficulty of its attainment.

The sweetness of its enjoyment, which is inexpressible, and inconceivable; for it is a mercy above all estimation. It is,

1. The riches of faith,
2. The rest and ease of the heart.
3. The pleasure of life.
4. A cordial at death.
5. A sweet support in all troubles.

1. It is the very riches of faith, the most pleasant fruit which grows upon the top branches of faith. The scripture tells us of an assurance of understanding, hope, and faith. All these graces are precious in themselves; but the assurance of each of them is the most sweet and pleasant part. Knowledge, above knowledge, is the full assurance of knowledge: hope above hope, is the full assurance of hope: and faith above faith, is the full assurance of faith. The least and lowest act of saving faith is precious, and above all value; what then must the highest and most excellent acts of faith be? Certainly, there is a sweetness in the assurance of faith, that few men have the privilege to taste; and they that do, can find no words able to express it to another's understanding. The weakest Christian is exalted above all other men; but the assured Christian hath a preference before all other Christians.

2. It is heart's ease; the very Sabbath and sweet repose of

the ſoul. Thouſands of poor Chriſtians would part with all they poſſeſs in this world, to enjoy it: but it flies from them. The life that moſt of them live, is a life betwixt hopes and fears; their intereſt in Chriſt is very doubtful to them. Sometimes they are encouraged, from ſenſible workings of grace; then all is daſhed again, by the contrary ſtirrings and workings of their own corruptions. Now the ſun ſhines out clear, by and by the heavens are overcaſt and clouded again: but the aſſured Chriſtian is at reſt, from thoſe tormenting fears and jealouſies which my text ſpeaks of, that are as cruel as the grave, and as inſufferable as coals of fire in a man's boſom. He can take Chriſt into the arms of faith, and ſay, "My beloved "is mine, and I am his. Return to thy reſt, O my ſoul, for "the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee!"

3. It is the pleaſure of life; yea, the moſt rational, pure, and tranſporting pleaſure. What is life without pleaſure? And what pleaſure is there in the world, comparable to this pleaſure? For let the ſealed and aſſured believer conſider, and compare; and he muſt needs find a joy and pleaſure, beyond the joy of the whole earth. If he conſider well what he is aſſured of, it is no common mercy, but Chriſt himſelf, and his love; a mercy incomprehenſible by men or angels; Eph. iii. 19. Put Chriſt into the ſenſible poſſeſſion of a believer, and joy is no more under his command for that time: he cannot forbear to rejoice; and eſpecially when his thoughts are exerciſed in comparing ſtates and conditions; either his own with others mens, or his own now, with what it was, and what it ſhall be. To think with thyſelf thus, I am aſſured of Chriſt, and his love; my intereſt in him is ſealed; but this is a mercy few enjoy beſides me. There be millions of ſouls of equal value with mine by nature, that ſhall never enjoy ſuch a mercy as this. Yea, the time was, when I myſelf was far from it, in my unregenerate ſtate. Lord, how is it I had not then been ſealed to damnation? O, it is well with me for the preſent, that I can call Chriſt my own; and yet it will be better and better: my condition will mend every day. I am now in Chriſt; and it is but a little while, before I ſhall be with Chriſt, and arrive at the full ſatisfaction of my very heart. O, what pleaſure doth every glance, backward or forward, give to the ſealed ſoul.

4. It is a cordial in death; and there is none like it. This will make the ſoul triumph over the grave, take death chearfully by the cold hand, welcome its grim meſſengers, and long to be gone, and be with Chriſt. Dark and doubting Chriſtians may indeed ſhrink back from it, and be afraid of the exchange;

but the aſſured ſoul longs to be gone, and needs patience to live, as other men do to die. When one was asked, if he were willing to die? his anſwer was, *Illius eſt nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Chriſtum;* Let him be loth to die, that is loth to go to Chriſt: The ſugar of aſſurance ſweetens the bitter cup of death, and makes it delectable to a believer's reliſh.

5. In a word, it is a ſweet ſupport, in all the troubles and afflictions on this ſide the grave. Let the aſſured ſoul be caſt into what condition the Lord pleaſes; be it upon a bed of ſickneſs; yet this gives his ſoul ſuch ſupport and comfort, that he ſhall not ſay, I am ſick. Sin being forgiven, the ſoul is well, when the body is in pain, Iſa. xxxiii. 24. Let him be caſt into a priſon, here is that which will turn a priſon into a paradiſe, Acts v. 41. Let him be pinched with outward want; this will ſupply all: "As having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all "things," 2 Cor. vi. 10. Thus you ſee how deſirable it is for its own excellency.

2. And as it is deſirable for the ſweetneſs of its own enjoyment, ſo alſo from the difficulty of its attainment. All excellencies are locked up under many difficulties; but none like this. It is indeed eaſy to preſume an intereſt in Chriſt, and cheat a man's own ſoul with a dream and fancy of our own creation; but it is hard, to get a ſealed, clear title to Chriſt and his benefits. And there be, among others, three things that make it difficult.

(1.) The corruptions that remain, and daily work in the beſt hearts; theſe are evermore puzzling and ſcaring the poor ſoul, with fears and doubts about its condition. Grace teacheth men due ſeverity to themſelves; and fear of their own deceitfulneſs, makes them think no hearts are like their hearts; eſpecially whilſt they compare other mens outſide with their own inſide, as generally they do. Oh, how do our own corruptions every moment raiſe miſts and clouds, that it is a wonder we ever ſhould have one clear beam of aſſurance ſhining into ſuch hearts, as our hearts are!

(2.) The multitudes of miſtakes and cheats, that are frequently committed, and found in this matter, makes upright hearts the more ſuſpicious and doubtful of their own condition. O when they read Matth. vii. 22. that many will ſay to Chriſt in that day, *Lord, we have propheſied in thy name, &c.* it ſcares them, leſt they alſo be deceived.

(3.) The grand importance of the matter, makes poor ſouls fearful of concluding certainly about it. O when a man con-

ſiders, that the whole weight of his eternal happineſs or miſery depends upon the reſolution of theſe queſtions, Am I in Chriſt; or am I not? it will make him tremble to determine. In a word, aſſurance is not in our power, or at our command. There be many holy, humble, diligent, and longing ſouls, to whom it is denied: it is arbitrarily diſpenſed by the pleaſure of the Spirit, to whom he will; and ſuch favours are rare, even among true believers; the more therefore it is to be valued and deſired by all, as the ſpouſe doth in this place. And ſo much to the firſt thing; *Upon what account the aſſurance of Chriſt's love is ſo deſirable in the eyes of Chriſtians.*

2. In the laſt place, let us conſider, how this mercy, which is ſo deſirable, may be obtained: And this is our proper work and buſineſs at this time.

You are now come to a ſealing ordinance, inſtituted on purpoſe for this noble end and uſe. O that we would pray and plead for it, as the ſpouſe here doth! "Set me as a ſeal upon "thine heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm: for love is ſtrong as "death; jealouſy is cruel as the grave," &c. Now, in order to the attainment of this moſt deſirable mercy, take a few neceſſary hints of your preſent work and duty, in the following directions.

Direction I. Would you be well ſecured of Chriſt's love to you, and that you are *ſet as a ſeal upon his heart?* Then exerciſe and manifeſt more love to Chriſt, and let him be much upon your hearts. If it be clear to you, that you have true love to Jeſus Chriſt, you need not at all to doubt, but you are in his heart, and in his love: *I love them that love me*, Prov. viii. 17. And ſurely you have now before you the greateſt motive in the world, to inflame your love to Jeſus Chriſt. Behold him as he is here repreſented to you, *wounded for your iniquities*; yea, ſacrificed to the wrath of God, for your peace, pardon, and ſalvation! "O what manner of love is this! Behold "how he loved thee!" If Chriſt's love draw forth thine, it will ſo far clear thy intereſt in his love, as it ſhall engage thy heart in love to him.

Direction II. But ſeeing the activity of your love will be according to the activity of your faith; therefore, in the next place, I adviſe you to make it the main work and buſineſs of this hour, to exerciſe your faith upon Jeſus Chriſt. Set yourſelves this day to believe: The more ſtrong the direct acts of your faith ſhall be, the more clear and comfortable its reflex acts are like to be.

There are three diſtinct offices, or employments for your faith, at this table, *viz.*

1. To realize.
2. To apply.
3. To infer, from the ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt.

1. To realize the ſufferings of Chriſt for you, and behold them here repreſented in a true glaſs to the eye of faith. See you that bread broken, and that wine poured out? As ſure as this is ſo, Jeſus Chriſt endured the croſs, ſuffered the wrath of the great and terrible God, in his ſoul, and in his body, upon the curſed tree, for, and in the room of poor condemned ſinners. Your faith for the one hath as much, yea, more certainty, than your ſenſe hath for the other. "This is a faithful "ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came "into the world to ſave ſinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. "And without "controverſy, great is the myſtery of godlineſs; God was "manifeſted in the fleſh," &c. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

2. Apply the ſufferings of Chriſt this day to thine own ſoul: Believe all this to be done and ſuffered in thy room, and for thy ſake. He offered not this ſacrifice for his own ſins, but ours; Iſa. liii. 9. Heb. vii. 27. He was incarnate for you, Iſa. ix. 6. "For us a child is born; to us a ſon is given." His death was for you, and in your ſtead, Gal. iii. 13. "He was made a curſe "for us;" and when he aroſe from the dead, "he roſe for our "juſtification," Rom. iv. 25. And now he is in glory, at the right-hand of God, he is there for us, Heb. vii. 25. "He ever "lives, to make interceſſion for us." It was the pride, paſſion, earthlineſs, and unbelief of thy heart, which Jeſus Chriſt groaned, bled, and died, to procure a pardon for.

3. Infer from the ſufferings of Chriſt, thoſe concluſions of faith that tend to aſſurance. As thus: Did Chriſt die for me, when I was an enemy? Then ſurely, being reconciled, I ſhall be ſaved by his life, Rom. v. 10. Again; Is Chriſt dead for me? Then I ſhall never die eternally. Nothing ſhall "ſeparate me "from the love of God; it is Chriſt that died," Rom. viii. 34.

Direction III. Mourn over all thoſe ſins, that cauſe the Lord to hide his face from your ſouls. Have you grieved the Spirit by your ſins? O be grieved for it this day at your very hearts; cover the table of the Lord with tears: "Look upon him whom "you have pierced, and mourn as for an only ſon." Though there be no merit, yet there is much mercy in a broken heart for ſin; and there is no ſuch advantage to get your hearts broken, as this is, which is now before you. When the ſhower of repentance is fallen, the heavens over thee may be clear, and the ſun ſhine out in its brightneſs upon thy ſoul.

Direction IV. In a word; pour out thy ſoul to God, in hearty

deſires, for a ſealed and clear intereſt in his love this day: Tell him, it is a mercy thou valueſt above life; *thy favour is better than life*, Pſal. lxii. 3. Tell him, thou art not able to live with the jealouſies and ſuſpicions of his love; thou art but a torment to thyſelf, whilſt thy intereſt in his love abides under a cloud. Beſeech him to pity thy poor afflicted ſoul, which hath lain down and riſen ſo long with theſe fears and tremblings, and been a ſtranger to comfort for ſo many days. Tell him, how weak thy hands have been, and ſtill are, in duties of obedience, for want of this ſtrength and encouragement. Engage thy ſoul to him this day, to be more active, chearful, and fruitful, in his ſervice; if it will pleaſe him now, to free thee from thoſe fears and doubts, that have clogged thee in all thy former duties. O, cry unto him in the words, and with the deep ſenſe of the ſpouſe in this text; "Set me as a ſeal upon thy heart, "(which hath a moſt vehement heat,) as a ſeal upon thine "arm: for love is ſtrong as death; jealouſy is cruel as the "grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire," *&c.*

THE TWELFTH MEDITATION, UPON

EPH. iii. 19. —*And to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge.*

THE knowledge of Chriſt, and of his love, is deſervedly, in this place, ſet down among the *deſiderata Chriſtianorum*, the moſt deſirable enjoyments of believers in this world. This love of Chriſt had centered the apoſtle's heart; he was ſwallowed up in the meditation and admiration of it, and would have all hearts inflamed and affected with it, as his was.

Some think the apoſtle ſpeaks extatically in this place, and knows not how to make the parts of his diſcourſe conſiſtent with each other, when he puts them upon endeavours to know that love of Chriſt, which himſelf confeſſes to paſs knowledge.

But though his heart was raviſhed with the love of Chriſt, yet there is no contradiction or inconſiſtency in his diſcourſe. He doth earneſtly deſire for the Epheſians, that they may know the love of Chriſt; *i. e.* that they might experimentally know his love, which paſſeth knowledge: That is, as ſome expound it, all other kinds of knowledge; yea, and all knowledge of Chriſt, which is not practical and experimental. Or thus:

Labour to get the cleareſt and fulleſt apprehenſive knowledge of Chriſt, and his love, that is attainable in this world, though you cannot arrive to a perfect comprehenſive knowledge of either. *Mens humana hoc et capit, et non capit; atque in eo capit, quod rapitur in admirationem;* as others reconcile it.

The note from it is,

Doct. *That the love of Chriſt ſurpaſſes, and tranſcends, the knowledge of the moſt illuminated believers.*

The love of Chriſt is too deep for any created underſtanding to fathom; it is unſearchable love, and it is ſo in divers reſpects.

1. It is unſearchable, in reſpect of its antiquity: No underſtanding of man can trace it back to its firſt ſpring; it flows from one eternity to another. We receive the fruits and effects of it now; but, O how ancient is that root that bears them! He loved us before this world was made, and will continue ſo to do, when it ſhall be reduced into aſhes. It is ſaid, Prov. viii. 29. 30, 31. "When he gave the ſea his decree, when he appointed the foundations of the earth; then was I by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delights were with the ſons of men."

2. The freeneſs of the love of Chriſt paſſes knowledge. No man knows, nor can any words expreſs, how free the love of Chriſt to his people is: It is ſaid, Iſa. lv. 8. *My thoughts are not your thoughts.* The meaning is, My *grace*, *mercy*, and *love* to you, is one thing, as it is in my thoughts, and quite another thing when it comes into your thoughts. In my thoughts, it is like itſelf, free, rich, and unchangeable; but in your thoughts it is limited and narrowed, pinched in within your ſtrait and narrow conceptions; that it is not like itſelf, but altered according to the model and platform of creatures, according to which you draw it in your minds. Alas! we do but alter and ſpoil his love, when we think there is any thing in us, or done by us, that can be a motive, inducement, or recompence to it. His love is ſo free, that it pitched itſelf upon us, before we had any lovelineſs in us at all: "When we were in our blood, he ſaid unto us, live;" and that was the time of love. It did not ſtay till we had our ornaments upon us; but embraced us in our blood, in our moſt loathſome ſtate; and of all ſeaſons, that is the ſeaſon of love, the choſen time of love, Ezek. xvi. 7, 8. Chriſt loved us, not upon the account of any foreſeen excellency in us, or upon any expectation of recompence from us: Nay, he loved us not only without, but

againſt our deſerts. Nothing in nature is found ſo free, as the love of Chriſt is; our thoughts therefore of this love going beyond all examples and inſtances that are found amongſt men, quickly loſe themſelves in an immenſe ocean of free grace, where they can find neither bank nor bottom.

The bounty and liberality of the love of Chriſt to his people, paſſeth knowledge. Who can number, or value the fruits of his love? They are more than the ſands upon the ſea ſhore. It would weary the arm of an angel, to write down the thouſandth part of the effects of his love, which come to the ſhare of any particular Chriſtian in this world. Who can tell how many ſins it pardons? "The free gift is of many offences "unto juſtification;" Rom. v. 16. How many dangers it prevents; or how many wants it ſupplies? This, we know, that "of his fulneſs we all receive grace for grace;" John i. 16. But how full of grace Chriſt is, and how many mercies have flowed, and ſhall flow to us out of that fountain of love; this is unknown to men, to the beſt, wiſeſt, and moſt obſervant men. O if the records of the mercies of our lives were, or could be gathered and kept, what vaſt volumes would they ſwell to? It is true, indeed, you have the total ſum given you in 1 Cor. iii. 22. *All are yours;* but it is ſuch a number, as no man can number.

The conſtancy of Chriſt's love to his people paſſeth knowledge: No length of time, no diſtance of place, no change of condition, either with him or us, can poſſibly make any alteration of his affections towards us; "He is the ſame yeſterday, "to-day, and for ever," Heb. xiii. 8. It is noted alſo by the evangeliſt, John xiii. 1. "That having loved his own which "were in the world, he loved them to the end." It is true, his condition is altered; he is no more in this world converſing with his people, as he did once in the *days of his fleſh:* He is now at the right-hand of God, in the higheſt glory; but yet his heart is the ſame that ever it was, for love and tenderneſs to his people. Our conditions alſo are often altered in this world; but his love ſuffers no alteration. Yea, which is much more admirable, we do many things daily, that grieve him, and offend him; yet he takes not away his loving-kindneſs from us, nor ſuffers his faithfulneſs to fail. We pour out ſo much cold water of unkindneſs and provocation, as is enough to cool and quench any love in the world, except his love; but notwithſtanding all, he continues unchangeable in love to us. This Peter found, notwithſtanding that great offence of his: No ſooner was the Lord riſen from the dead, but he greets him in the

life of his former love and ancient respect; *Go tell the disciples, and tell Peter.*

So then the love of Christ is a love transcending all creature-love, and human understanding. We read in Rom. v. 7, 8. that "peradventure for a good man, some would even dare to "die;" but we never find where any, beside Jesus Christ, would lay down his life for enemies. It is recorded as an unparalleled instance of love in Damon and Pythias, the two Sicilian philosophers, that each had courage enough to die for his friend. One of them being condemned to die by the tyrant; and desiring to give the last farewel to his family; his friend went into prison for him, as his surety to die for him, if he returned not at the appointed time: But he did not die; yea, he had such a confidence in his friend, that he would not suffer him by default to die for him; and if he had, yet he had died for his friend. But such was the love of Christ, that it did not only put him into danger of death, but put him actually unto death, yea, the worst of deaths, and that for his enemies. O what manner of love is this! We read of the love that Jacob had for Rachel, and how he endured both the cold of winter, and heat of summer, for her sake. But what is this to the love of Jesus, who for us endured the heat of God's wrath? Beside, she was beautiful, but we unlovely. David wished for Absalom his son, *Would God I had died for thee!* But it was but a wish; and had it come to the proof, David would have shrinked from death, for all the affection he bare his beautiful son. But Christ actually gave his life for us, and did not only wish he had done it. O love, transcending the love of creatures; yea, and surmounting all creature-knowledge!

The *uses* follow.

1. *Use.* If the love of Christ pass knowledge, O then admire it! yea, live and die in the wonder and admiration of the love of Christ! As it is a sign of great weakness, to admire small and common things; so it speaks great stupidity not to be affected with great and unusual things. O Christian! if thou be on that converse with the thoughts of this love, thou canst not but admire it; and the more thou studiest, the more still wilt thou be astonished at it. And among the many wonders that will appear in the love of Christ, these two will most of all affect thee, *viz.*

1. That ever it pitched at first on thee.
2. That it is not, by so many sins, quenched towards thee.

1. It is admirable, that ever the love of Christ pitched at first

upon thee; for are there not millions in the world, of ſweeter tempers, and better conſtitutions than thyſelf, whom it hath paſſed by, and yet embraced thee? "Lord, (ſaid the diſciples) how is it, that thou wilt manifeſt thyſelf unto us, and not unto the world?" John xiv. 22. Surely he did not ſet his love upon thee, nor chuſe thee, becauſe thou waſt better than others, but becauſe he loved thee.

2. It is admirable, that his love to thee is not extinguiſhed by ſo many ſins, as thou haſt committed againſt him. Lay thy hand, Chriſtian, this day upon thy heart; and bethink thyſelf, how many have been the provocations, wrongs, and diſhonours thou haſt been guilty of againſt thy God, and that ſince he called thee by his grace, and ſet his love upon thee. What, and yet love thee ſtill! Yea, notwithſtanding all, he is ſtill thy God, and loves thee with an unchangeable love. O, with how many notwithſtandings is his love continued to thy ſoul! All this is juſt matter of admiration and wonder for ever.

3. Is the love of Chriſt paſt knowledge, an unſearchable love? Then learn, whence and why it is, that the ſouls of believers never are, nor can be tired, in beholding and enjoying Jeſus Chriſt. We uſe to ſay, one thing is tireſome; and it is very true, if it be an earthly thing, it will be ſo, how ſweet or excellent ſoever it ſeems at firſt: And the reaſon is, becauſe the beſt creature-enjoyment is but a ſhallow thing, and a few thoughts will ſound it to the bottom; and there being no ſupply of new matter, to feed the hungry ſoul upon, it is quickly fated and cloyed with the repetition of the ſame thing over and over. But it is far otherwiſe in Chriſt: For though he be but one, yet in that one thing all things are virtually and eminently contained; ſo that every day he ſeems a new Chriſt for ſweetneſs, and yet is the ſame Chriſt ſtill. And in heaven the redeemed ſhall view him with as much wonder, and love him with as much ardour, after millions of years, as they did at their firſt ſight of him. O, there is no bottom in the love of Chriſt; it paſſeth knowledge.

4. In a word; Beſtow your beſt and chiefeſt love upon Chriſt, whoſe love to you paſſeth all knowledge. Let no creature be loved equally with Chriſt; but as his love to you paſſeth all creature-love, ſo let yours to him be a matchleſs love.

Believer; Chriſt loves thee with an unſearchable love; he loves thee more than the deareſt friend, *that is as thine own ſoul*, loves thee. He loves thee more than thou loveſt thy child, or the wife of thy boſom; more than thy ſoul loves thy body, with which it is ſo intimately united: And wilt thou content

thyſelf with ſuch poor, narrow, remiſs affections to Jeſus Chriſt? O look upon him this day in his red garments! Behold him in the ſtrength of his love, breaking through the curſe of the law, the wrath of God, the agonies of death, to bring home the fruits of his eternal love to thy ſoul; and whilſt thou art beholding, and muſing upon it, let the heart melt, thy eyes drop, and thy very ſoul cry out, "Behold how "he loved me! Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt."

A FAMILIAR CONFERENCE

BETWEEN A MINISTER AND A DOUBTING CHRISTIAN,

CONCERNING THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Chriſtian.] SIR, If it may be no interruption to your ſtudies, I would be glad to be reſolved of ſeveral doubts, that ariſe in my mind, about receiving the bleſſed ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper.

Miniſter.] 'I ſhall be very glad to contribute any thing for 'removing thoſe ſcruples which may diſturb you upon that ac-'count; therefore, pray go on.'

Chriſtian.] Sir, I have heard many ſermons, and read ſeveral diſcourſes, which do much urge and declare the neceſſity of communicating in this bleſſed ordinance; and yet I durſt never preſume to join therein.

Miniſter.] 'Have you then hitherto lived in the neglect of 'this important duty.'

Chriſtian.] To ſpeak freely, Sir, I never yet did communicate therein all my life; becauſe I have much queſtioned, whether I were worthy to receive that bleſſed and holy ſeal, to the glory of God, and my own edification and comfort; ſince I never truly underſtood the inſtitution, nature, adminiſtration, and ends of it, nor the qualifications of thoſe who are to be partakers thereof, according to the appointment of Jeſus Chriſt.

Minister.] 'Well then, I hope, if these things be plainly 'opened to you, it may much conduce to satisfy your scruples.'

Christian.] Sir, I shall receive your instructions with thankfulness, and, if my heart deceive me not, shall rejoice in the light and knowledge that I may gain thereby.

Minister.] 'Let us then, *first*, enquire into the qualifications 'of a sincere Christian in general; and, *secondly*, of the qua-'lifications of such Christians, as are meet to partake of the 'Lord's supper; for they are distinct, and sometimes separate.'

Christian.] I hope, in doing this, you will much help me to judge of my present state and condition God-ward. And now, in the first place, pray inform me, how I may know if I am a sincere Christian.

Minister.] 'All true believers, among other graces, have 'such a knowledge of God in Christ, as works by love, and 'stirs up in them an earnest study of the will of God, and a 'sincere endeavour to live in the faith, knowledge, and prac-'tice of it.'

Christian.] Sir, I cannot boast of my knowledge; yet, by the grace of God shewed to me, those conceptions which I have of God in Christ, have, I hope, so far prevailed upon me, that to live in the knowledge, love, and enjoyment of him, and to have my all devoted to his will and praise, is all the heaven that I desire in this world, and a great part of that which I hope for in the world to come.

Minister.] 'These are good signs of a real and renewed 'change in your soul, and so doubtless have wrought good dis-'positions in you; of which you have had evidence in your 'heart, and have made it appear in your life and actions.'

Christian.] I would be loth to flatter myself; but yet I hope, that I find some delight in the word of God, both read and preached: and do seriously meditate thereon, that I may "grow "in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord." And tho' I am sometimes tempted with vile and vain thoughts, yet I endeavour to stifle them, and my heart rises against them. I thank God, I strive to resist the first motions to sin, and avoid all occasions of evil; and I am never more uneasy, than when I happen into the company of prophane and ill people, having an hatred to lying, obscene and filthy discourses, swearing, cursing, and all dishonourable reflections upon God and godliness. I make conscience of taking up a slander against my neighbour; and to be just, and to do good to all, according to my ability, and "to walk in all the commandments of the "Lord, blameless."

Minister.] 'If these be the fruits and effects of your faith, 'it is not a dead faith; yet we must not rest upon our own 'works, or righteousness, for justification, merit, or satisfac-'tion; because it will be derogatory to the merits and righte-'ousness of Jesus Christ, and dangerous to our own souls.'

Christian.] Sir, I know right well, that there is no justifica-tion, but by the blood of Jesus; neither dare I trust to my own righteousness, but to his only, for the pardon and remission of my sins. And if by grace I am enabled to bring forth any fruit meet for a gospel faith, repentance, and love; these I bless God for, as a part of my duty and happiness, and desire to look on them as proofs of faith, (if they are worthy to be such) and no otherwise.

Minister.] 'This is well. But do you find your soul always 'in a good frame and temper, without haltings, slips, or excur-'sions?'

Christian.] Sir, I dare not say I do: for I must with sorrow acknowledge, that at sometimes my thoughts are polluted, my words are unsavoury, without edification, my actions not a-dorning the doctrine of the gospel of God my Saviour; but such as I fear may prove a grief and snare to others. My spi-ritual relish of God's word is very insipid, and its authority not so sensibly powerful; so that I am unready to any thing that is good, even like a dead man, as if my religion had no life nor soul in it.

Minister.] 'Well; but when you thus fall into sin, or fail 'in your duty, what do you think of yourself and ways?' 'How are you affected therewith?'

Christian.] When I am in this deplorable condition, my soul is much disturbed, my joy and peace of conscience are gone: but when I am a little rouzed out of this sinful lethargy, my heart is then melted with sorrow for my folly and miscar-riage, and I address myself to God with the greatest fear and shame, humbly imploring him to *renew a right Spirit within me.*

Minister.] 'Well, friend, if your conscience confirms what 'your tongue has uttered, you have expressed enough to evi-'dence the sincerity of your obedience to God, and that you 'are a sound believer, and a sincere convert. And I hope you 'have faith also in Jesus Christ, the mediator; without a due 'respect to whom, our faith and good affections will not deserve 'the name of being truly evangelical and saving.'

Christian.] Through grace, I desire to acknowledge and em-brace the Lord Jesus Christ, upon the terms on which he is of-

fered in the gospel; to believe all his doctrines, as my teacher and guide; to trust and depend upon him, as the "High-priest "of our profession, who makes atonement by his sacrifice and "intercession." And I desire to submit to his government, as Lord and King of his church.

Minister.] 'These are very considerable attainments, and in-'clude the substance of saving-faith. But are you sensible how 'you arrived to this good disposition and frame of mind? Do 'you imagine it was natural to you, or the result of the im-'provement of your natural reason, powers, or faculties?'

Christian.] Oh, Sir, I dare by no means ascribe that to nature, which is only the effect of divine grace. If I have any measure of sanctification, it is only by the gift and grace of God; for I have had too much experience, that by nature I am alive to vanity and sin; but dead and lifeless to God, and to all real goodness; that I am darkness; folly possesseth my soul; I am at enmity with God, and altogether unable to will, or to do what is pleasing in his eyes; having a great contrariety in my heart to the way of salvation proposed in the gospel of Christ.

Minister.] 'And have you taken up strong resolutions, that, 'by the help of God, and the assistance of his blessed Spirit, 'you will endeavour to persevere in the faith and practice 'which you have now declared, to your life's end?'

Christian.] Sir, there is nothing that I more dread than apostatizing, or relaxing in my duty and profession, and that I should have a backsliding heart from the Lord; and I earnestly watch and pray against every symptom and degree thereof.

Minister.] 'Do you think, that by your own strength and 'ability, you have power to persevere and continue in the 'faith and obedience of the gospel; against the many tempta-'tions and corruptions that assault us, and the lamentable mis-'carriages of those who seemed pillars in the house of God?'

Christian.] I have no confidence in my own ability, Sir, I assure you; but do wholly rely on the *Rock that is higher than I;* even upon him who hath promised, that he will *perfect a good work begun to the day of Christ.* I rest upon him, who is the *author and finisher of our faith;* I beg his holy Spirit, to instruct, guide, assist, and comfort me. And I earnestly desire and purpose, (by the grace of God) to expect those aids, in a constant and universal attendance upon God in his ordinances, with an honest, humble, and believing heart.

Minister.] 'These are all plain evidences of the saving grace 'of God: which I beseech the Lord may always continue, and

'grow in your heart; that so you may have a full assurance of 'his love, who hath dealt so graciously with you.'

Christian.] The Lord grant, that in the sense of his love to my soul, I may walk worthy of his grace. And now, Sir, by what has been said, do you think I may presume to feed on Jesus Christ at his table, and receive that blessed seal of my Redeemer's love?

Minister.] 'You know I told you, that a man may be a true 'Christian, and yet may not be fit to partake of this holy ordi-'nance: because he may believe unto salvation, and yet be so 'ignorant of this mystery, as not to be able to make a due 'application of it to his own soul.'

Christian.] Ah, Sir, I would willingly be informed, what is necessary to be done by a sound believer, in order to the partaking of this blessed ordinance?

Minister.] '*First*, He must consider, that the elements and 'matter of this ordinance, are not common bread and wine 'after consecration, but set apart to a holy use, and so to be 'received with an holy understanding and fear. And therefore 'the Corinthians were blamed by the apostle, for their igno-'rance and irreverence, 1 Cor. xi. Again, that these ele-'ments, so blessed and set apart by Christ's appointment, do 'represent a crucified Redeemer; and we are to partake of 'them with love, as a memorial of his death; and with faith, 'as the seal of the promise, and the means appointed by God, 'to convey the benefits of Christ crucified to the soul.'

Christian.] Sir, these considerations raise up my desires to come to the Lord's table, which I hope to be a partaker of, with the same sentiments that you have now laid before me; and that I shall feast mine eyes on that lovely object, which is so full of love; and that my eye will so deeply affect my heart toward my holy Redeemer, that I may meet with my blessed Lord in all the ways of his appointment.

Minister.] 'Again; you ought to set your soul upon self-ex-'amination, that so you may be sensible of your wants and de-'fects, and come to Christ for a supply of the graces of his 'holy Spirit; that you may exercise faith, love, repentance, 'and all other graces, with such warmth and vigour, that Jesus 'Christ may delight in you, and you in him; and there may 'be a mutual and joyful renewing of your covenant of love 'and obedience to your blessed Saviour.'

Christian.] Sir, we cannot suppose that there should be the actings and exercises of grace, where the habits are wanting, no more than there can be motion without life: but it is usual-

ly said, that the holy Sacrament is a quickening, cherishing, comforting, and confirming ordinance.

Minister.] 'No doubt but the worthy prepared receivers of 'this blessed banquet, have by a due participation found their 'love inflamed, their faith strengthened, their obedience con-'firmed, their humility increased; so that they have appeared 'vile in their own sight, and have had an utter detestation of 'all sin, and an earnest expectation and desire, after the glo-'rious appearance of their blessed Lord and Redeemer.'

Christian.] Sir, since the benefits and blessings are so great, it makes me the more earnestly long to be a communicant in these sacred mysteries.

Minister.] 'It is the duty of all Christ's ministers, to give 'the sacramental bread of life, and the cup of consolation, to 'those who hunger and thirst after Jesus Christ, and his right-'eousness and kingdom. And now I have told you your duty, 'I shall be willing to declare to you the nature and the circum-'stances of this blessed ordinance.'

Christian.] Sir, I must confess I am not so well instructed herein; and if I may not be too troublesome, would be very glad to understand what this holy ordinance is, and why it is called a sacrament.

Minister.] 'It is a seal of the covenant of God in Christ, 'wherein, by certain outward signs, instituted by our Saviour, 'Christ and all his benefits are signified, conveyed, and sealed 'to the worthy receiver. The word sacrament hath been an-'ciently used, both to signify baptism and the supper of the 'Lord; and was taken up by the ancient fathers, from the 'oath by which the Roman soldiers were sworn to their duty, 'and were not admitted to be soldiers, until they had solemn-'ly taken that oath or sacrament. It is called by several other 'names in scripture, namely, breaking of bread, Acts ii. 42. 'the Lord's table, 1 Cor. x. 21. the communion, 1 Cor. x. '16.'

Christian.] Pray, Sir, how many sacraments were instituted under the New Testament, and by whose authority were they appointed?

Minister.] 'There are only two, baptism, and the Lord's 'supper; and they were ordained by the sole and immediate 'authority of Jesus Christ; and those other five which the Pa-'pists have added, and called by that name, as order, or or-'daining of priests, penance, marriage, confirmation, and ex-'treme unction, or anointing at the hour of death; all these

were neither immediately instituted by Christ, nor have the proper ends of a sacrament.'

Christian.] What are the elements to be used in the sacrament of the Lord's supper?

Minister.] 'Bread and wine, and no other, Luke xxii. 19, 20. And all communicants are to receive both of them, notwithstanding the bold and sacrilegious practice of the Papists, who give the people the bread, or wafer only, none but the priest receiving both the bread the wine. And this without any sound reason, or scripture-warrant; and they may as well corrupt, totally abolish, or add to any of the ordinances and institutions of Christ Jesus, as presume to do this.'

Christian.] What resemblance or congruity is there between bread and wine, the signs, and what is signified by them in the Lord's supper?

Minister.] 'Bread is so necessary, that it is often put for all kind of food, and necessaries; and the least morsel of it is completely bread. Thus Christ is food, and all necessaries to the soul; and every worthy communicant receives a whole and complete Christ: And as corn is not bread, till it be bruised or ground; so Jesus Christ had not been food for us, if he had not been bruised with wounds and sorrow. And as bread is the common food of all people, so is Jesus Christ of all real Christians. Again, as bread being a solid body, may properly denote the body of Christ; so wine, being liquid, may represent his blood: And as wine is pressed from the grape, so the blood of Jesus was forced out by his agony, and the wounds of the cross.'

Christian.] May not the bread and wine at our common tables signify the same thing?

Minister.] 'No; because this is solemnly set apart, and consecrated to sacramental use by prayer and blessing, and by applying the words of our dear Redeemer used in the institution of this ordinance.'

Christian.] Is not the bread and wine after consecration transubstantiated, or transformed from the substance of bread and wine, into the real substance and essence of the body and blood of our Saviour; since Christ's own words are, *This is my body*, &c. *This is my blood*, &c.

Minister.] 'No, by no means; this being a Popish error, attended with many absurdities and idolatrous practices. But it is the body and blood of Christ, in the sense that Christ

'ſpake it; but he did not ſay, This is no longer bread in ſub-'ſtance, but the very ſubſtance of my body. And ſuch phra-'ſes are often uſed in ſcripture, and yet not always to be taken 'in a ſtrict ſenſe, no more than that "Rock was Chriſt, *and* '"I am the true vine, the door, the ſhepherd," *&c.* More-'over, Chriſt intended it for a ſacrament, that is, a ſign of 'what it repreſents; now it cannot be the real body of Chriſt, 'and the ſign of it alſo. Again, our ſenſes of ſeeing, ſmelling, 'and taſting, aſſure us that it is bread and wine, and no way 'ſubſtantially changed after the words of conſecration. And 'if we muſt deny our ſenſes in this, we may as well doubt 'whether theſe words, *This is my body*, &c. be recorded in 'holy ſcripture, though we ſee them there.'

Chriſtian.] If the bread and wine be not the body and blood of Chriſt really and ſubſtantially, how then doth the true believer, in receiving, eating, and drinking, them, receive, eat, and drink the body and blood of Chriſt?

Miniſter.] 'By receiving thoſe elements ſo conſecrated, as 'ſigns, ſeals, and conveyances of Chriſt and his benefits to 'the ſoul; and a true Chriſtian hath them conveyed to him 'thereby, as really as a writing under hand, ſeal, and witneſ-'ſes, can convey lands, or other benefits, which are not really 'in the writings themſelves.'

Chriſtian.] What are the actions of the miniſter, in adminiſtering this ordinance?

Miniſter.] 'After bleſſing the bread, he breaks it, and deli-'vers it to the communicants in the words of Jeſus Chriſt, 'ſignifying thereby a crucified Jeſus, who was wounded for 'our tranſgreſſions. He then pours out the wine in the ſight 'of the congregation, and delivers that to them alſo, after 'bleſſing it in the words of Chriſt. And hereby is repreſented 'to us, our dear Redeemer ſhedding his blood for us; which 'is the ſacrifice of atonement, whereby we obtain remiſſion of 'ſins. In which action, the miniſter, ſtanding in Chriſt's 'ſtead, as his miniſter, (wherein Chriſt is preſent, and by his 'Spirit and authority) doth as really tender and beſtow himſelf 'and benefits, as if he had ſpoken the ſame words in his own 'viſible perſon.'

Chriſtian.] But ſay ſome, ſince our Saviour reſtrained this ordinance to the time of his coming; he being come in the Spirit, it is now at an end, and aboliſhed.

Miniſter.] 'If theſe enthuſiaſts mean the coming of the Spi-'rit, in its ſanctifying operations; then it ſeems, that it was 'appointed only for unbelievers; and that the diſciples, who

'communicated with Christ at the institution thereof, had not 'the Spirit, but were unbelievers; which is false and absurd. 'If they mean the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, or the 'pouring it forth in an extraordinary measure; the practice of 'the apostles and the church of God, both at that time, and 'long after, will abundantly contradict that assertion; Acts ii. '42. 1 Cor. x. 16.'

Christian.] What are the benefits that Christ gives, and we receive, in this ordinance?

Minister.] 'The exercise and increase of every grace; the 'cleansing our souls from the guilt of sin; healing the wounds 'which sin hath made in our consciences; a confirmation of 'the truth and promises of God; an humble and holy delight 'in Christ, and our fellow Christians; and a more earnest 'longing for, and expectation of, the blessedness of the life to 'come: And is an ordinance chiefly intended for confirma-'tion of our faith, love, and increase in grace; so that no 'person ought to come thereunto, but in faith.'

Christian.] What are the necessary preparations for this solemn ordinance?

Minister.] '(1.) That a man have the habit of faith. (2.) 'That he have an hearty disposition and willingness, to re-'ceive Christ as his Lord and Redeemer. (3.) That he be in 'charity with all men; John i. 7. Matth. xv. 26. We must 'also exercise renewed acts of repentance, and clear up our 'interest in Christ, and have our souls full of faith and love to-'ward him.'

Christian.] Sir, there is one scripture that, I believe, discourages many from partaking of the Lord's table; neither do I indeed well understand it: 1 Cor. xi. 27, 28, 29. "Whosoever shall "eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, "shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let "a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and "drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh un-"worthily, eateth and drinketh damnation (or judgment) to "himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

Minister.] 'I am indeed of the opinion, that the want of 'right understanding this scripture, has been a stumbling-'block to many, and so I shall endeavour briefly to explain it. 'The apostle here truly represents, and very much aggravates 'the danger of unworthy receiving this holy sacrament: but 'he does not deter the Corinthians from it, because they had 'sometimes come to it without due reverence; but exhorts

' them to amend what had been amiſs, and to come better pre-
' pared and diſpoſed for the future. And therefore, after that
' terrible declaration, that "Whoſoever ſhall eat this bread,
' "and drink this cup of the Lord," &c. He does not add,
' therefore let Chriſtians take heed of coming to the Lord's
' table; but let them come prepared, and with due reverence;
' not as to a common meal, but to a ſolemn participation of
' the body and blood of Chriſt: "But let him examine him-
' "ſelf; and ſo let him eat of that bread, and drink of that
' "cup." For if this be a good reaſon to abſtain from this
' ordinance, for fear of performing it in an undue manner;
' then a wicked man may as well lay aſide all other holy duties,
' as prayer, hearing, and reading the word of God, for fear
' of the unworthy uſe of them; ſince, *The prayer of the*
' *wicked*, (that is, one that reſolves to continue ſo) *is an abo-*
' *mination to the Lord.* And Chriſt ſays, *Take heed how you*
' *hear.* And the apoſtle ſays, that thoſe who will not believe
' the goſpel, it *is the ſavour of death to them*; That is, it is
' deadly, and damnable to ſuch perſons. Now there is as
' much reaſon for men to give over praying, or attending on
' the word of God, as not to receive the ſacrament; ſince he
' that prays unworthily, that is, without ſpiritual benefit and
' advantage, is guilty of great contempt of God, and Jeſus
' Chriſt, and aggravates his own damnation; as well as he,
' who by partaking of the Lord's-ſupper unworthily, eats and
' drinks his own judgment. And when the apoſtle adds,
' "But let a man examine himſelf; and ſo let him eat of that
' "bread, and drink of that cup:" It ſeems clear, by the oc-
' caſion and circumſtances of his diſcourſe, that he does not in-
' tend we ſhould examine our ſtate of grace, whether we are
' true believers or no, and ſincerely reſolved to continue ſo;
' but he ſpeaks of the actual fitneſs and worthineſs of the Co-
' rinthians at that time, when they came to receive the Lord's
' ſupper. And therefore, *ver.* 20. he ſharply reproves their
' irreverent and unſuitable carriage at the Lord's table: they
' coming thereunto diſorderly, one before another. It was
' the cuſtom of Chriſtians then, to meet at the feaſt of charity,
' in which they did communicate with great ſobriety and tem-
' perance; and when that was ended, they celebrated the
' Lord's ſupper. Now, among the Corinthians, this order
' was broken: The rich met, and excluded the poor from
' this common feaſt; and after an irregular feaſt, (one after
' another eating his own ſupper as he came), they went to the
' ſacrament in great diſorder; One was hungry, having eaten

'nothing at all; others had drank and eat intemperately; and 'the poor were despised and neglected. This the apostle con-'demns as a great profanation of that solemn institution, for 'behaving themselves with as little reverence, as if it were a 'common supper, or feast: And this he calls, *not discerning 'the Lord's body*: making no difference between the sacrament 'and a common meal; which contemptuous carriage, he calls '*eating and drinking unworthily*; for which he pronounceth 'them *guilty of the body and blood of Christ*: by which, he 'tells them, they did incur the judgment of God, which he 'calls eating and drinking their own judgment; for so the 'word signifies in the Greek, and not eternal condemnation. 'It is meant of some temporal judgment and chastisement, 'in order to the preventing of eternal damnation: Which is 'evident from what follows: "He that eateth and drinketh '"unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself." 'And then he says, "For this cause many are weak and sickly '"among you, and many sleep." That is, for this irreve-'rence of theirs, God sent among them several diseases, of 'which many had died. And then he adds, "For if we would '"judge ourselves, we should not be judged." That is, if 'we would censure and examine ourselves, so as to be more 'careful for the future, we should escape the judgment of 'God in these temporal punishments. "But when we are '"judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not '"be condemned with the world." That is, when by ne-'glecting thus to judge ourselves, we provoke God to judge 'us; he inflicts these temporal judgments upon us, to prevent 'our eternal damnation.'

Christian.] Sir, I am much obliged to you for the satisfaction you have given me in these weighty points, referring to the Lord's supper: And now, though in a deep sense of my great unworthiness, yet with humble confidence in my dear Redeemer, who graciously invites *all that are heavy laden* to come unto him; I do intend, by the blessing of God, to address myself to the Lord's table the next Lord's day; humbly beseeching the assistance of your prayers, that I may not come without the *wedding-garment*: but may be so qualified, as to obtain those glorious privileges and blessings, which are there represented and sealed to every worthy communicant.

A HYMN

UPON

ROMANS v. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

6. WHEN we were deſtitute of ſtrength,
Ourſelves to help or ſave,
Chriſt for ungodlineſs, at length,
His life a ranſom gave.

7. For one that's righteous, we would grudge
To lay our life at ſtake;
And for a good man, it were much
Such an exchange to make.

8. But God his matchleſs love commends,
In that Chriſt Jeſus dies
For us, when we were not his friends,
But wretched enemies.

9. Much more, being juſtify'd, and free,
Thro' his own blood, from ſin;
From wrath to come we ſav'd ſhall be,
Ev'n by the life of him.

10. For if, when enemies, for us
Chriſt's death did end the ſtrife;
Much more, when reconciled thus,
He'll ſave us by his life.

11. Yea, more than ſo, we triumph now
In God with one accord,
Having receiv'd atonement through
Chriſt Jeſus our own Lord.

Wherefore to him, who is the firſt
Begotten of the dead,
Who over earthly princes muſt
Be ſupreme Lord and Head:
Ev'n unto him who lov'd us ſo,
To waſh us in his blood,
And make us kings and prieſts unto
His Father and his God:
To him dominion therefore,
By us be given, when
This preſent world ſhall be no more;
To which we ſay, *Amen.*

THE REASONABLENESS OF PERSONAL REFORMATION, AND THE NECESSITY OF CONVERSION:

The true METHODS of making all men happy in this world, and in the world to come.

Seasonably discourſed, and earneſtly preſſed upon this licentious age.

To all ſuch as are moſt immediately and particularly concerned in the following treatiſe, of what rank or quality ſoever they be.

GENTLEMEN,

TWO of the greateſt, faithfulleſt, and moſt intimate friends in the world, reaſon and conſcience, command me here, in their names, courteouſly to ſalute and invite you in.

They earneſtly deſire three or four hours ſerious and private conference with you, about ſome very important perſonal concerns of yours, which cannot admit of denial, or long delay. And if you make any trifling excuſes, they have commanded and inſtructed me, here to anſwer them.

In caſe of abſolute and obſtinate refuſal to hear them, they order me to tell you; if you will not talk with me now, they will talk with you ſhortly, whether you will or no. If you ſay, you are not now at leiſure, having other buſineſs to do; they both deſire you to conſider, *Firſt*, You can have no buſineſs in the world of equal importance with theirs. *Secondly*, That

whatever other lawful affairs you are purſuing, their buſineſs with you will no way obſtruct, but greatly promote it. And, *laſtly*, That a greater perſon than any of you, loſt his life, by pocketing up a letter at night, ſaying, To-morrow is a new day; and it proved to him indeed *dies noviſſima*, his laſt day; he loſing by that neglect the only opportunity of living longer.

If you demand, how your reaſon came to be bound up in this little book, and ſay, that which is reaſon to this author, may be folly and nonſenſe to you: I am bid to tell you, you are obliged firſt to read and compare; elſe your own reaſon will preſently call it your own folly and nonſenſe, ſo to pronounce. Sound reaſon is uniform, and like itſelf all the world over. It is true, laws and dictates equally oblige one, as another, in like caſes and circumſtances.

If you ſay, there have been ſome jars and diſguſts betwixt you, and your reaſons and conſciences; you and they have fallen out ſo oft, that you have no great fancy to come near them in private, for you expect nothing but harſh and chiding language from them; and therefore are fain, by continual diverſions, and quick ſucceſſions of buſineſs, to maintain your peace, by keeping at as great a diſtance from them as you can.

It is their deſire you ſhould here know, *Firſt*, That their debates with you will be as calm and friendly, as they are ſeaſonable and neceſſary. *Secondly*, That they both profeſs (and you may believe them) they neither do, nor can deſign any thing but your good. *Thirdly*, That that perſon is certainly in a very bad caſe, that cannot endure to converſe with himſelf. *Fourthly*, That you herein deny a civility to your own reaſons and conſciences, which you daily pay to ſtrangers and inferiors. And, in a word, that they deſire a reconciliation with you upon as fair and honourable terms as can well be deſired: and that this being done, they will both ſtick faithfully by you in all the troubles and dangers of your lives, and follow you as your inſeparable friends, into any thing but ſin.

If you ſay, this is but a wheedle, to draw you into a book, that will make you melancholy, and perhaps mad.

It is their ſenſe and judgment, that of all men living, you have leaſt reaſon to pretend the one or the other, in this caſe: for they are very confident, you are now in the moſt melancholy circumſtances, men can ordinarily be in on this ſide hell. And for madneſs they deſire to know, what you yourſelves would call that man, that is running with ſuch poſt-haſte to hell, as will not admit of two or three hours ſtop upon the

road, to prove himself to be no madman, but in his right mind and wits?

Moreover, they commaad me to inform you, it is their desire, that seeing their debates with you will neither be tiresome nor impertinent, you will please to hear them out what they have to say to you: and then, if you shall find cause to complain, that your pleas and excuses are not fairly drawn, or that you have new matter to furnish a better apology; they are both content you shall have your liberty to amend, or add what you please; and if they be not able to refute them, they will give you no further trouble or interruption in your course.

This, Gentlemen, is what I have in charge to say to you in the porch; and now, if you please, the door is open; you may be as private as you will. They will attend you to your bed-chamber, or closet; and I heartily wish an happy issue to this friendly debate.

JOHN FLAVEL.

CHAP. I.

The introduction, and state of the case.

§ 1. REASON exalts man above all earthly beings; it is his dignity and privilege, that God hath furnished him with abilities of mind, to recollect, animadvert, compare, infer, ponder, and judge his own actions. Hereby he becomes not only capable of moral government by human laws, (which no creature beside him is) but also of spiritual government by divine laws, and the blessed fruition of God in glory, which no other species of creatures (angels only excepted) have a subjected capacity for.

Right reason, by the law of nature, (as an home-born judge) arbitrates and determines all things within its proper province; which province is extended far and wide. All actions, natural, moral, and civil, are weighed at this beam and standard; none are exempted, but matters of supernatural revelation; and yet even these are not wholly, and in every respect, exempt from right reason: for though there be some mysteries in religion above the sphere and flight of reason; yet nothing can be found in religion, that is unreasonable.

And though these mysteries be not of natural investigation, but of supernatural revelation; yet reason is convinced, nothing can be more reasonable, than that it takes its place at the feet of faith; which is but to suffer itself to become pupil to an omniscient and infallible Instructor. The resolution of our reason into faith, and of faith into God's veracity, are acts highly becoming reasonable beings in such cases as these.

It may not pry too nicely into unrevealed mysteries, demand the reasons, or examine the causes of them as bold and daring Socinians do; but it feels itself obliged to receive all those things, both as possible and true, which God hath revealed, counting his revelation alone to be reason sufficient. For the veracity of God takes out of reason's mouth all objections against the truth of them; and his almighty power silences all its scruples against the possibility of them.

But in all matters properly under the jurisdiction of reason, every man is obliged to account with himself, as well as others, for the reasonableness of his own actions; and that act which will not endure the test of sound reason, it judges not fit for the entertainment of a man. If reason cannot justify it, it is beneath the rank and dignity of a man to do it.

§ 2. The light of reason was at first the bright lamp or candle of the Lord, till sin, like a thief, melted it down to snuff; whereby (comparatively speaking) it is becomes a poor glimmering light in the best of men, and almost quite extinguished in some men. Fallen man is become less than himself, and will never act like himself, till he be fully restored to himself.

Sanctification indeed snuffs and trims the lamp of reason; but there being few sanctified persons among men, a double misery consequently befals a very great part of mankind; whose conversation speaks them not only destitute of religion, which bereaves them of the blessedness of the world to come; but men almost entirely despoiled of the benefits and blessings of their own reason, which makes them unhappy and miserable in this world: beasts, rather than men, as the sacred scripture stiles them: unreasonable men; men fallen out with their own faculties; who after many a sharp battle with their reason, are now dragging it like a conquered captive, at the chariot wheels of their victorious and triumphant lusts.

§ 3. It is scarce imaginable, that ever sin should prevail so far as it doth, to the very unmanning of men, did they not first delude and bribe their own reason, by close and cunning applications to their bewitched affections; whereby, though

they cannot make it a party, yet they make it stand by as a silent spectator, or neuter, whilst they act the beast, yea, the devil, rather than the man.

We little know how far unsanctified reason may (this way) be prevailed upon to quit its throne, and resign its sceptre into the hands of lust and appetite; yea, to engage in the defence of their most absurd laws and dictates. It only serves in some men, to invent excuses, pleas, and specious pretences, to justify or extenuate their beast-like actions; the basest servitude it can be condemned to.

If this will not do, sensual lusts have another way to obtain their satisfaction, in despite of reason and conscience; even by stopping their ears to the voices of both, and pushing on with a brutish *impetus*, they suffer neither to enjoy the opportunity of a calm debate of these matters with them.

§ 4. But let men do what they will, it is next to an impossibility, they shall so far subdue and destroy those inbred principles of reason and conscience, but that they will, at one time or other, give them some checks and oppositions in their profane courses; especially when they shall get the advantage of some eminent distress, or special danger, which disposes them to lend an ear to their voices. And there be few men in the world, but are sometimes providentially cast into such cases and conditions.

So that appeals to the reason of the most profligate wretches, are not altogether vain and useless: for if the case cannot be tried and decided at the bar of reason and conscience at one time, it may with more advantage at another: and haply, appeals to reason may produce a reformation in some men, sooner than appeals to the scriptures, or principles of faith; especially when the world is so notoriously drenched in practical atheism, that serious religion becomes the common subject of drollery amongst multitudes of men.

Yet it were hard and uncharitable, to imagine any man sunk so deep into the mire of beastiality and profaneness, as not still to retain some value and veneration for his own reason, and as much as he abuses it, yet to refuse the whole world in exchange for it; and to account it a greater misery to be utterly deprived of it, than to have the hoofs of an horse given him in exchange for his hands and feet.

§ 5. The scriptures therefore do, in many cases, appeal to the reason of sinners, and design their reformation by such appeals: for it being a most shameful thing, for a man to be

convicted at the bar of his own reason, of acting like a beast rather than a man, every man is presumed to be afraid, and ashamed of such an indictment. Such miscreants are the shame and reproach of humanity itself; they are branded for brutes throughout the sober world; their company declined and shunned by all wise and good men. He that hath no reason to justify his actions, may yet be supposed to be owner of some stock of natural shame; which cannot but afford a blush, upon such a plain conviction. This therefore was the course which the prophet Isaiah took, by divine direction, to reform the idolatrous Israelites; Isa. xlvi. 8. He states the case at the bar of their own reason, and calls for a verdict upon it. The case was this; *Whether idols, having not power enough to shew themselves gods, those that worship them, must not want wisdom enough to shew themselves men?* "Remember this, and shew "yourselves men; and bring it again to mind, O ye transgres-"sors!" *q. d.* For shame, let not men act like brutes, which have no animadversion.

§ 6. When things therefore are brought to such an exigence, that ruin or reformation is the only choice men have to make, and all religious impressions so obliterated and worn out, that men pay no reverence to them; an appeal to the reason of men, seems then to be an hopeful method of prevailing with them, to suffer a reformation rather than a ruin. Not that I imagine the topics of reason able to afford more powerful arguments, than those of religion do; but that they, who by their ignorance and strong prejudices against religion, have made themselves more uncapable of conviction that way, may haply feel the force of reason prevailing so far at least, as to put their outrageous lusts under some restraints.

As for the scriptures, and serious religion begotten by them in the souls of men, they are perfect strangers to all, but the names of these things: And even their very names are grown almost ridiculous with them too. But reason may convince and shame them. What force the reason of man hath, even without saving grace, to produce civility, sobriety, and other moral virtues, is abundantly evident in the very Heathens; who, by the only light of reason, discovered so much odiousness in vice and immorality, and such an amiable beauty in justice, temperance, and the other moral virtues, that their praises for them are sounded throughout the world.

Now, whatever unthinking men dream, to me it is evident, that when kingdoms and commonwealths are overflowed with unrestrained vice and immoralities; when cursing and swearing

becomes the common language, drunkenness and adultery the common practices of the inhabitants; God will either sweep away the filth of those nations, by the besom of a general reformation, or he will sweep away their inhabitants out of them, with the besom of destruction. For if we have not excussed the notion and belief of a God, and that he animadverts the wickedness of men, (which the very Heathens, by the light of nature, saw and acknowledged), we may thereby easily be led to this conclusion, that such overflowings of abomination do, and must certainly presage our desolation, except speedy and general reformation do prevent it.

§ 7. Now, the persons, whose reformation I particularly design by this method, being men that exercise more reason than religion, might (methinks) be prevailed with to take up at last, and reform their unreasonable, as well as ungodly courses, could they be once prevailed with to debate these matters with cool, considerative minds, becoming men governed by reason, not wholly swayed like brute-beasts, by lust and appetite.

And is it not highly reasonable, that men should weigh their own actions at the same beam and standard where they weigh other men's actions; and renounce all that with shame and detestation, which they themselves must censure as utterly beneath, and unworthy of a man? Wherefore hath God planted a principle of reason and conscience within us? Is it rational to think, it was planted there for no other end or use, but to scan and censure other mens words or actions by, but not our own? Or to be wholly useful to other mens interests, without any benefit to ourselves? Ask thine own reason, silly man, why God placed it in thy soul? and for what use it was intended? And it will tell thee, it was particularly designed and appointed, to regulate and order thine own life and actions; and next, for the benefit and good of the community. It will tell thee, there is not a single act thou dost, of any weight or moment, but thou oughtest to consult with it, and have its pass or licence before thou do it. But when thou entereſt into a serious course of actions, thy consultations with it ought to be very frequent and solemn, because these things are of great importance to thee.

Thy reason will tell thee, sinner, that it is a vile affront to it, to be thrust by thee from the council-table, unworthily dismissed from its office, and discharged from any further attendance upon thy life, and concerns thereof, and brutish lust and appetite consulted in its room; and that it needed not at all to have been implanted in thy soul, if the same principles that

govern the beasts of the field, must also be thy governing principles. It stands ready to offer its service to thee, to save thee from, or to receive thee out of those mischiefs thou hast, or mayest run thyself into; if thou wilt but hear, and obeys its advice, it tells thee, it is thy privy-counsellor, by God's appointment; and if thou wilt not find leisure among the heats and hurries of thy lusts, to consult it, and hearken to its counsels now; if thou wilt not forsake the conduct of thine own reason and conscience, which have a right and authority to govern thy words and actions, and follow thy blind and headstrong lusts and passions, thou shalt hear other language from them, when thy lusts have precipitated thee into thine own ruin and destruction; as they speedily and inevitably must, and will do, according to the course they now steer for thee.

§ 8. And there is yet more ground to hope, that reason may prevail with men living under the gospel, to return to sobriety and temperance, when we consider their reason is assisted by some illuminations from the Christian religion. They live in a land of Bibles and ministers, where they cannot avoid the light; an advantage far beyond whatever the heathens enjoyed; who yet by their single unassisted reason, arrived to an eminency in moral virtues.

Our reasons and consciences do not only convince us, (as theirs also did them) that there is a God, and a future life of retribution, wherein every man shall be judged according to his works; but also, that the scriptures are the very word of God, and rule of faith and manners. And if there be any among the debauched crew, that question or deny it; we may be confident, none of them are able, by plain and sound reason, to overthrow those mighty arguments pleaded for the confirmation of that truth: At least, they find in themselves a strong suspicion and fear, that they may prove to be true; which jealousy and suspicion, working together with their own reason and consciences, are no contemptible helps toward their recovery.

For if what reason, conscience, and scripture, with one mouth, pronounce, be true and certain, (as undoubtedly it will be found to be); then it must be plain and obvious to them also, that their brutish lusts have put them into the direct and ready way, both to ruin themselves, and also greatly to hazard the community to which they belong.

§ 9. As for themselves, if they will make a judgment upon their own condition, in the light of reason, conscience, or scripture, (and they very well know, they take their measures

in perfect darkness, if they take them not by this direction); then, continuing the same course they now do, they are a lost generation.

All their lawful and faithful guides tell them, with one mouth, they are certainly in the broad way to damnation; and that, how irksome and terrible soever the thoughts and apprehensions of hell are to them, yet thither they must certainly come, if they pursue this course. Their reason plainly tells them, he that chuseth the means, and engageth in the way leading to hell, must, and ought to make account, that hell is the place he is preparing for.

Conscience is as plain and positive with them, that they must either return, or perish. The scripture confirms the testimonies of both, by telling them plainly, That *the end of these things is death*; Rom. vi. 21.

It is downright folly and madness, by the vote of the whole rational and sober world, for any man to conclude, or hope he shall be happy in the world to come, whose life is drawn through, and finished in all manner of obscenity, filthiness, and profaneness in the present world.

For let the case be brought into the light of your own reason, as dim as it is, and let it freely judge, when you are belching out your black and horrid blasphemies against God, imprecating damnation from him upon your own souls, wallowing in beastly lusts, vomiting and roaring in taverns and ale-houses: ask, I say, your own reason, conscience, or the scripture, whether all, or either of them, will allow you to say or think, 'Now we are in the right way to eternal blessedness! This is 'the very course that will bring us to happiness in the world to 'come: this pleaseth God better, and is a surer path to glory, 'than repentance or faith, mortification, prayer, or reformation.' No, no, as blind as your reason is, and as seared as your consciences are, you will never bring them to comprobate, or subscribe such absurd and horrid conclusions as these.

But, on the contrary, they will tell you, that if you will have the pleasure, you must have the pain and torment of sin. That it is madness to say, you are afraid to burn, but not afraid to sin; that you are loth to be damned, and yet challenge the almighty God to his face, to damn you: as much a folly, as to drink a baneful dose of known poison, and think to feel no painful gripes afterwards.

As for the scriptures, they appeal to the reason of men in this case, as a most known and allowed thing, scarce imaginable to lie hid from any man. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. "Know ye not, that

" the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Be
" not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulte-
" rers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with man-
" kind; nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers,
" nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

It would make the bowels of a compassionate Christian to roll and yern within him, to behold multitudes of souls of invaluable worth, running greedily on to their eternal ruin, wilfully stopping their ears all the way, to the voices of their own reason and conscience, as well as to the voice of God in his word; not once making a pause, till they fall into that gulph of eternal and intolerable misery, into which, with great precipitation, they are casting themselves.

§ 10. And then, for the community to which they belong; how dangerous, yea, how destructive such persons are to it, cannot possibly be hid from any wise and serious observer. For if one sinner destroys much good; if one Achan trouble the whole camp of Israel; how much more will whole swarms and droves of drunkards, blasphemers, and adulterers, as now fill every place, pull down the judgments of God upon those places and kingdoms wherein they breath? If our fears and dangers were greater than they are, yet reformation might save us, Jer. v. 1. " Run ye to and fro through the streets of Je-
" rusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad pla-
" ces thereof, if you can find a man, (*i. e.* a public man, a
" man in authority,) if there be any that executeth judgment,
" that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it." And if our hopes and confidences were much higher than they are, yet unrestrained sin would undo us. Kingdoms and commonwealths are not so much endangered by the powers and policies of their enemies without them, as they are by the unreformedness of profligate wretches within, and amongst them. Reformation quickly recovers the antient glory of kingdoms, and makes them the terror of their enemies.

For though there will be still too much sin privately committed under the best laws, and the most vigorous and impartial execution of them; yet abundance of sin would thereby be prevented, and the sins that are committed would not become national, but personal only; and these would not so much concern and hazard the public weal and tranquillity of the state.

Moreover, states and kingdoms are in no small hazard by the public debauchery, and common profaneness of their subjects; forasmuch as in this very sink and puddle of their lusts, lie manly wisdom, sprightly courage, and true gallantry of their

subjects, are quenched and drowned, their spirits softened and effeminated. It is hard to imagine those men will engage far in the cause of reformation, when reformation itself is the only thing they hate and fear.

Nor need we wonder to find men intimidated, and low-spirited, in times and places of imminent danger, who not only carry about them so much guilt, (which is the fountain of fear) but are wholly addicted to sensual pleasures, which they are loth to hazard upon public accounts and considerations, these being the only heaven they have, or hope for: "Whoredom, "and wine, and new wine take away the heart," Hos. iv. 11. It is in the very nature of these sins, to make men sottish, and in the very nature of guilt to make them pusillanimous.

Seneca observes, (and his observation is true) * 'That the 'conscience of a wicked man is a terrible scourge and torment 'to him, perpetually lashing him with sollicitous thoughts and 'fears; so that he distrusts all securities, and knows not where 'to be safe.' Hence it comes to pass, that many men of good extraction, liberal education, and excellent natural endowments, become so useless, yea, so pernicious as they are; who, could they be recovered but to temperance and sobriety, would become both excellently useful, and ornamental to the nation where they had their birth, and to the safety and honour whereof they owe their service.

§ 11. This most desirable recovery and reformation of profane debauched persons, is not simply and absolutely impossible: And if magistrates and ministers were every where exemplary themselves for sobriety and piety, zealous and impartial in the discharge of their respective duties, a general reformation would not be difficult. But when those, whose office it is to suppress wickedness, shall associate themselves with lewd and profligate persons, and vie with them in their profane courses, or discourage more conscientious persons in the discharge of their duties; this makes reformation morally impossible.

If profaneness were once found the general *odium* of the people, and a bar to all preferments, it might be hoped, things would quickly alter for the better. It was an ancient custom among the Heathens, (as learned and excellent Mr. Hale of Eaton, out of Chrysostom observes), That if a man offered himself to contend in the *Olympic games*, he was not permitted so to do, till proclamation had been first made, *Whether any man knew him to be either a servant, or a man of infamous life?*

* Seneca, epist. 97.

And if any such imputation were proved against him, it was sufficient to keep him back, let his skill be what it would.

What care was here taken, that their vanities should not be discredited? And will neither reason nor religion convince us, that not only equal, but far greater care ought to be taken, to discourage profaneness among Christians, than the blind Heathens ever took, to preserve the reputation of their vain exercises? Let all subordinate ministers of state, and officers in the church, consider how great a part of this blessed reformation is demanded at their hands.

§ 12. Were kingdoms and commonwealths once purged from that spirit of profaneness and debauchery, which thus defiles and overflows them, and the people generally reduced but to civility, sobriety, and temperance; experience would quickly shew them the comfortable effects, and happy fruits thereof.

For though this be much short of what Christianity exacts from all its professors, and insufficient to obtain the happiness of the world to come; yet it is greatly conducent to the civil happiness and flourishing of the kingdoms of this world; and, therefore richly worthy the studies and endeavours of all men, to promote and obtain it.

There is no kingdom or commonwealth in the Christian world, which would not by this means breed and send forth multitudes more than they do, with excellent abilities and qualifications, fitting them to sit at the helm of government, and steer a more prosperous course than they do at present. A wise and steady direction of the arduous and important affairs of kingdoms, can only be expected from those that are able to govern themselves, and their own affairs, with sobriety and discretion.

If the laws of nations take care for the preservation and growth of timber, fit for the building of houses and ships, and every one sees the usefulness and necessity of such acts; much more ought they to take care for such an education of men, as may render them serviceable members to the state, both in camp and council.

Magistrates are (in a sense) the foundation of kingdoms; the strong shoulders, that bear the burden of government: And reason will tell, that so great a weight and stress, as the affairs and concerns of kingdoms, ought not to be laid on their shoulders, whose legs, through debauchery, are too weak to bear their own reeling and staggering bodies.

Seamen and soldiers are the walls of kingdoms, and (under God) their prudence and courage are the peoples defence and safeguard. Plutarch tells us, there were two virtues in Hanni-

bal, which made him proſperous and ſucceſsful: There was in him, *Plurimum audacia ad capienda pericula, et plurimum conſilii inter ipſa pericula:* He was bold in attempting, and prudent in managing the moſt difficult ſervices. The former had ſignified little without the latter. Courage may throw men into the midſt of difficulties; but counſel and wiſdom helps them to emerge thoſe difficulties; and I am ſure, that cannot be rationally expected from men, that daily dethrone their own reaſon by debauchery.

But when men, not only ſober, juſt, and temperate, but religiouſly good, are employed in public truſts and ſervices; we cannot but think, the ſecurity and proſperity of ſuch a ſtate, are abundantly provided for. And our confidence hereof is not only founded upon the maxims of human reaſon, but of ſcripture, wiſdom, and authority alſo.

What a renowned, proſperous, and ſucceſsful captain of the armies of Iſrael, was good Joſhua! No man was able to ſtand before him all the days of his life, Joſh. i. 5. But what bred thoſe brave, gallant, and undaunted ſpirits in the breaſt of this hero, and crowned his noble deſigns with ſuch admirable ſucceſs? If we look into *ver.* 8. we ſhall find it was religion, that gave both the edge and point to his natural courage; "This "book of the law ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou "ſhalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayeſt obſerve to do all that is written therein: for then thou ſhalt make "thy way proſperous, and then thou ſhalt have good ſucceſs."

Hezekiah, this way, became a nonſuch among the kings of Judah; for "he clave to the Lord, and the Lord was with him; "and he proſpered whitherſoever he went forth," 2 Kings xviii. 5, 6, 7. And dying David, from a whole life of experience, recommended this as the only method of proſperity, unto Solomon his ſon; "Keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to "walk in his ways; that thou mayeſt proſper in all that thou "doſt, and whitherſoever thou turneſt thyſelf," 1 Kings ii. 3, 4.

How great a luſtre therefore doth this truth caſt about it: that the reſtraint and reformation of vice, and the due encouragement of virtue and piety, becomes the very civil intereſt of kingdoms and nations, by the joint votes and ſuffrages both of human and divine wiſdom? Let any kingdom or ſtate make trial of this method, and from that very time they ſhall date their proſperity. This will make them become the terrors of their enemies round about them: Peace and proſperity ſhall flouriſh in the midſt of them; which is the true level and deſign of this moſt neceſſary and ſeaſonable attempt.

CHAP. II.

Producing one dictate, or rule of right reason, respecting morality, allowed by mankind; and passing current through the world, without one negative voice, except only from those men, whose reasons are utterly captivated by their lusts.

§ 1. SUCH is the degeneracy and deep corruption of some men's natures, by ill education, base company, and long custom in sin; that abandoning and casting away the bonds and restraints of right reason, as well as religion, they give the full scope and liberty to their lusts and passions, reckoning their chief happiness to consist in the gratification and satisfaction of their sensitive appetites. They affect a soft, delicate, sense-pleasing life; reckoning it the only real heaven to be desired and sought by them; and any other heaven beside that to be merely notional and fantastic. This is the element they desire to live and sport in, fitly described, Tit. iii. 3. by *serving divers lusts and pleasures*. Hence it comes to pass, that their bodies serve only to be strainers for meats and drinks, and channels for filthy lusts to stream through. In this stream, their masculine agility melts away, and all public hopes and expectations from them, are totally defeated and disappointed. Appetite is the master, and reason the slave.

These men (if it be fit to call them men) have bid defiance to their own reason, and denounced a war against their own faculties; as if reason had licensed and privileged (which it never did, nor can do) their worse than brutish lusts, to act to the uttermost of their abilities, without any manner of restraint over them.

§ 2. But notwithstanding the present captivity of reason, under usurping and domineering lusts, so long as it hath a permanent and fixed root and principle in their nature, it is possible it may recover its throne and empire over them again; as many a imprisoned king hath done, and probably would do in a very short space, if those prejudices they have conceived against its government, were but once fairly confuted and removed; which certainly is not hard to do.

They are of opinion, that the laws of reason are too severe, strict, and rigorous; that they too much abridge them of their pleasures and delights; and that the government of sensuality being more easy, favourable and indulgent, is for that reason, much more eligible and desirable.

Whereas right reason designs not the abandoning of all plea-

sures, but only the exchange of them, and that exchange every way to our great advantage. The only hurt or loss, (if this must be accounted so) any man can sustain by the exchange of pleasures made by reason and religion is this; that they design for you the rational, ordinate, and congruous delights, both of a man, and of a Christian; in lieu of the lower, baser, and filthy pleasures of a beast or a devil.

They propose to you rules about pleasures, far more safe and grateful, without any culpable severity, or austerity in them. Reason would only regulate and legitimate your delights, and religion sanctify them; that you might much more purely and sweetly enjoy them, without either shame arising from their turpitude, or fear from their guilt. The rules of both are large and indulgent enough; and, keeping within their lines and limits, men shall find such generous, manly, and agreeable delights, as are no where to be enjoyed without them.

§ 3. To make this evident, I shall postulate and presume but one thing, and that a thing so immediately true and self-evident, that in the first naked proposal of it, it naturally and easily lets itself into every man's understanding, and no sooner asks, but gains the approbation of right reason. And that self-evident principle, which I take for granted, no man of sound intellectuals will quarrel or dispute, is this:

That good which comprizeth and involveth the true honour, profit, and pleasure of the whole man, which is more congruous to human nature, and preservative of it, is to be preferred in our estimation and choice, to that which only yields a lower degree of pleasure, without profit or honour, to the baseſt part of man: and that low and transient pleasure it doth yield, attended and followed with many present and future miseries, destructive to the whole man.

The several parts of this complex proposition, cast such a light and glory round about them, that I cannot imagine, but as soon as it shall be propounded to the judgment and censure of sound reason, it must immediately gain both its approbation and applause.

But because reason in many men is so beclouded and disturbed by lusts and passions, that it can neither receive things orderly, nor judge of them truly and impartially; I conceive it needful, to demand the censure and judgment of their reason, upon the particulars comprised in this general complex proposition; that so weighing and examining them one by one, we may try, whether sound reason hath any valuable exception against any part, or member thereof.

§ 4. And, *first*, I take it for granted, that no man's reason will deny, or demur to this proposition; that *good is to be chosen, and evil to be avoided:* for the will is naturally carried to that which is *good*, as to its proper object, and shuns that which is evil. And that is naturally good, which is convenient and agreeable to nature; and that naturally evil, which is disconvenient and hurtful to nature. So that the choice of good rather than evil is the natural choice of the will; and this choice of the will is founded upon the law of self-preservation, without which the creation would quickly disband, and no particular being could be long preserved.

And not only the will of rational creatures chuseth the good, and refuseth the evil; but every sensitive creature is endowed with a natural faculty, to discern the one from the other, in order to the preservation of their beings. You find it in the smallest and most despicable animals; and therefore cannot deny it unto man, the noblest and most excellent being on earth; except only in his non-age, before he hath lived to the years of discretion. Children, indeed, in their infancy, have no knowledge to discern between good and evil; Deut. i. 39. But men, not discerning good from evil, or chusing evil rather than good, are many degrees beneath babes.

Secondly, Nor will reason hesitate at all upon this particular, That *there are degrees of goodness found among pleasures and delights;* some are better than others. Every life is not alike pleasant and happy. To deny this, is to make the most despicable worm, or fly, equally happy with the most excellent creature upon earth. And beside, for the conviction of such debauched persons as I am here arguing with, it will follow clearly from the denial of that truth, that they really gain nothing to themselves, by all their extravagant and licentious courses; there being altogether as much pleasure and felicity, in a temperate, chaste, and sober life, as there is in that beastly life they live; and their very departure from the way of sobriety, to embrace the ways of debauchery, most clearly evinceth to the world, that they do not think all pleasures equal; but that they do confidently expect to find more pleasure and satisfaction in the way that they chuse, than they did in the way of sobriety, which they have left and abandoned.

Thirdly, I cannot be so uncharitable to think, but the relicts of reason in the most profligate person, will readily admit and grant, That *wherever the good of pleasure, profit, and honour, meet together, and jointly conspire to make the life of a man more comfortable, and more durable upon earth; that is much*

rather to be chosen, than a mere transient touch of sensitive pleasure, accompanied with present regret, and followed with the ruin of estate, name, honour, soul, and body. He that thinks otherwise, is more fit for a bedlam, than a rational and sober confutation. These things therefore I take for granted, they being innate and self-evident notions and principles in all men.

§ 5. The wisdom and goodness of God are clearly discernible, in leaving such principles of reason, and common notices of conscience in men after the fall, as prompt them naturally unto justice, chastity, temperance, and sobriety; and do struggle within them, to restrain them from, or recover them out of their immoralities; from which many advantages do result.

For hereby God is acknowledged all the world over; men every where shewing by these things the work of the law written in their hearts; Rom. ii. 15.

Hereby kingdoms and commonwealths are preserved; this being the common bridle, which restrains the outrageous lusts of millions of men, which else would turn the world into confusion; though here and there some have slipt bridle, and run into all excess of riot. We justly admire the providence of God, in butting, bounding, and restraining the boisterous ocean, by mountains, rocks, and sands: and as much is he to be admired, in curbing the insatiable lusts of men, by these innate principles of reason and conscience.

Hereby the way to sin is in some measure barred and shut up; and the further progress of sinners, already entered into it, stopped and denied. For actions done with regret, cannot be supposed to be done so frequently and furiously, as if they were done without any regret; or that the way to sin was smoothed to them, with a full consent and approbation of their whole self. For most sinners find in themselves what Medea did,

——— *Video meliora, proboque,*
Deteriora sequor ———

'They both see and approve that which is better, though they 'follow that which is worse.'

In a word, these relicts of reason and conscience in men, are fit handles to catch hold on, for the turning them about from Satan unto God. When Paul reasoned with Felix, about temperance, righteousness, and judgment to come, his words laid hold upon these handles, and gave him such a shake, that the text saith, Felix trembled. And, O! that this might take hold of the reason and conscience of every profane reader, and produce some more excellent and lasting effect upon his soul.

§ 6. These notices and dictates of reason and conscience in

men, being so necessary, and many ways beneficial to themselves, as well as to the whole community; it must therefore be a horrid villainy to war against them; and, by violence, to suppress and enslave them to their own lusts.

This is, as if a company of desperate ruffians, should assault innocent and noble travellers upon the lawful road, bind and gag their guides, whilst they rob and prostitute them. Thus deal brutish lusts, (headed by the devil) with the affections of men, travelling along the lawful road of duty, under the conduct of reason and conscience. For this villainy it was, that the apostle tells us, "The wrath of God was revealed from "heaven against the Heathens, who held the truth in unrighte-"ousness," Rom. i. 18. They had the light of natural reason and conscience in them, the inbred notions of good and evil; which raised their hopes or fears, according to the nature and quality of their actions.

* *Conscia mens ut cuique sua est, ita concipit intra*
Pectora pro facto spemque metumque suo. Ovid.

But their headstrong boisterous lusts, rudely and violently brake in upon reason and conscience, imprisoned and bound them; as Zedekiah did the faithful prophet Jeremiah, for the discharge of his duty to him. For this, "the wrath of God was revealed "from heaven against them." And indeed, we cannot wonder it should be incensed against them, as it will against all that act like them. For into such a sin as this, many direful aggravations fall in together, to make it a monstrous and prodigious sin. Here we find an high and causeless abuse of the noblest natural faculties and powers of a man's own soul. What harm have thy reason and conscience done thee, by stimulating and persuading thee to temperance, chastity, and sobriety; or by struggling and striving with thee, to prevent both thy present and future ruin? Do they lay their faithful and loving hands of restraint upon thee, when they see thee running headlong into destruction? And do they deserve for this, and no worse than this, to be thus trampled under foot, and abused? Ask thyself, man, Whether thou thinkest thy very dog deserves to be hanged, for opening at midnight, and taking that thief by the throat, who came to cut thine? And darest thou use those noble powers within thee, worse than thou wouldst use a dog? Humanity would blush at such an action.

These vile abuses of thy reason and conscience carry also in them an horrid contempt of God; whose patent, officers, and

* As each man's soul of good or ill is conscious,
So hope for good he feels, but fears for vice.

delegates, thy reason and conscience are. Those certainly sin with an high hand against the Lord, who make nothing to controul, kick, and lay in irons, his commission-officers, appointed for no other end, but their present and future felicity. Nay,

Such men as these are found in a plain confederacy with the devil, and that in a most unnatural and horrid plot against their own souls and bodies. Their light and their lusts are struggling together. Sin and conscience are combating one with another; the one to destroy, the other to save the man. Dareſt thou join with thy lusts against thy light, and think not to be brought in as a party and confederate with the devil? The stopping of the mouth of thy conscience, fully proves both thy consent and concealment: and if proved consent and concealment make thee not a party and accessary, it will be very strange.

Plutarch, in his book *de Amicitia*, relates a story of a Persian, who scuffling in the dark with a magician, against whom he had a grudge; and not being able to conquer him himself, called upon his friend who stood by him with a naked sword ready to strike, but durst not, for fear of killing his friend: the Persian cries out, 'Strike, strike, however thy stroke fall: thrust 'at an adventure. I care not, so thou kill the magician, 'though thou kill him through mine own body.'

Much so stands the case here, with a little variation. Thou art furiously set upon the enjoyment of thy lusts; nothing will quiet thee, but their satisfaction. Thy reason and conscience will oppose it, and struggle hard with thee, to withhold thee from them. But thou careſt not, in the rage of thine insatiable appetite, tho' thy reason and conscience both fall in the combat, rather than thy lusts should not be satisfied. Oh, what brutes! yea, what monsters, can sin turn men into!

§ 7. If men have not quite extinguished both reason and conscience by debauchery, and divested themselves of humanity; one would think, no motion or address can possibly be made to them more fair, rational, and inoffensive, than this, that they would be pleased but to consult themselves, and hearken to the native and unconstrained voice of their own reason and conscience, before they engage themselves in matters of great concernment, upon which both their present and eternal welfare do depend; or, if they are already engaged, yet at least to lend an ear to what they have to offer for their recovery, before it be too late.

You are not here urged and pressed, to hearken to the voices of your enemies that hate you, or to the counsel and ad-

vice of mere strangers, who know not your affairs; but to hearken to yourselves, to be your own arbitrators and judges, to draw up the award with your own hand. It is a strange and an hard case indeed, and scarce to be supposed, that men should fall out with themselves at such a rate, that they had rather hear the voice of their mortal enemy the devil, and listen to his advice and counsel, than to the voice of their own reason and conscience.

We all account it madness in Balaam, to beat his innocent ass, and threaten to kill her for shunning the sword of the angel, that opposed his passage in a sinful and dangerous expedition; but how many use both their reason and conscience worse than asses, because they dare not go forward, and desperately carry them into the very midst of dangers and miseries, which they plainly foresee, and warn them of?

What injuries have thy reason or conscience done thee, man? What affronts have they given thee; that thou wilt not suffer them to speak, or offer one word, though never so pertinent, seasonable and necessary? There is a civility due from us to mere strangers; yea, to strangers of an inferior rank and quality. The least we can do, is to give them a patient hearing; and not interrupt them, whilst they speak nothing but what is rational, pertinent, and necessary, especially if it be to their own good and advantage. It is strange, men should not think themselves as much obliged to pay civility and respect to their own reasons and consciences, as they daily pay to mere strangers and inferiors. Give them but a patient hearing, and they will both tell thee;

'We are thine appointed guardians, and have our commission from God, to advise, direct, and counsel. We are thy faithful and inward friends; yea, we are thine ownself, and the best and noblest part of thyself too. At our hands God will require thy blood, shouldst thou perish by our silence or treachery. We cannot be both silent and innocent, both are in such hazard. Do not abuse us, and stop our mouths for crying out, stop, stop; when we see thee departing from the paths of honesty, honour, and safety, and taking the direct road to that gulph of misery, in which few (if any) footsteps are found of such as return again, that are far engaged therein.

'Suffer us but fairly and friendly to expostulate the matter with thee. What design can we have against thy true interest; whilst thine, and ours, cannot possibly be opposite; or disjunct, but one and the same interest?"

Well then, that which thy reason and conscience offers, being so weighty, fair, and just, and what thine own interest plainly lies in; I will not be so uncharitable, as to suppose thou wilt either refuse to hear, or reject what they have to say, in the following cases and debates.

CHAP. III.

Wherein the true censure and judgment of right reason and conscience, are given upon profane swearing, and blaspheming the name of God: As also their replies to several pleas offered in defence or excuse thereof.

§ 1. GOD bestowed on man the noble faculty of speech, (a peculiar favour and privilege) for two ends and uses. (1.) That by the use of his tongue, he may glorify his Maker, and sound forth the praises of his Redeemer. (2.) That we might thereby be able to communicate our minds one to another, in all our necessary and convenient interests and concernments, whether civil or religious. This member, (the tongue) tho' small in quantity, is found to be mighty in efficacy; and whilst it is kept under the rule and government of grace, the words that drop from it, are as apples of gold in pictures of silver. Gracious words are bread to feed, and water to refresh the souls of others. A sanctified tongue is as a tree of life. Conversion, edification, and consolation, are the delicious fruits of the lips.

But the tongues of some men break loose from under all the laws and rules both of reason and religion, and serve only to vent the froth and filth, which abound in the heart, as in a fountain of pollution: *For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.* The tongue moves lightly, but falls heavily; it strikes soft, but wounds deep. It would not spare men of the highest rank and eminence, did not the fear of capital punishments teach them so much wit, to keep their tongues in prison, that they may keep their bodies out of prison. And though, for this reason, they are afraid of making too bold with the names of men; yet having no fear of God at all, they fall upon his great and dreadful name, tossing it to and fro, without any respect or reverence.

Augustus prohibited the common use of his name, lest it should grow too cheap and vile, by the common and needless using of it. The name of Mercurius Trismegistus was very sparingly used, because of the great reverence the people had

for him. The very Heathens were afraid to pronounce the name of their great God, Demogorgon, as fearing the earth would tremble, when his name was mentioned. How doth the reverence of Heathens to their false gods, expose and aggravate the impudence of professed Christians, in their vile indignities and abuses of the great and terrible name of the true God! Yea, they not only take up his name vainly and rashly into their lips, but audaciously insert it by a profane oath into their common talk, as that which gives the grace, lepor, and ornament to their discourses. Some have not been ashamed to say, what pity is it, that swearing should be a sin; which gives so great a grace and ornament to language?

§ 2. Swearing by the name of God in a righteous cause, when called thereto by due authority, is not only a lawful, but a religious act, founded upon, and directed to the honour of God's omniscience; whereunto there is a solemn appeal made, in every assertory and promissory oath, and a religious acknowledgment made him, of his infallible knowledge of the truth or falsehood of our hearts, and all the secrets of them, be they never so involved and inward things.

The lawful use and end of swearing, is to put an end to all strife, and to maintain both equity and charity among men; the two bonds and ligaments of human society. Now, it being the sovereign right and property of God alone, infallibly to *search and try the hearts and reins of men*, he thereby becomes the infallible witness to the truth or falsehood of what they speak; so that in every such lawful oath, there is not only a solemn appeal, and in that appeal, an ascription of glory to his sovereign omniscience; but therein (implicitly at least) they put themselves under his wrath and curse, in case they swear falsely; which makes this action most sacred and solemn.

The deep corruption of human nature by the fall, makes these appeals to God under a curse necessary. For it is supposed, though men be false and deceitful, yet there is some reverence of a Deity, and fear of his wrath and curse, left unextinguished in their fallen nature. So that men will rather speak the truth (though to their own shame and loss) than by invocating so glorious a name in vain, put both soul and body under his wrath and curse. By which it appears what an awful and solemn thing an oath is; and that every good man, not only takes a lawful oath with holy fear and trembling, because of the solemnity of the action; but rather ought to chuse death, than to swear profanely, because of the horrid malignity of the action.

§ 3. The contumely and malignity found in profane oaths, appears in that terrible threatening, "The Lord will not hold "him guiltless that taketh his name in vain:" A threatening, altogether as just and righteous, as it is severe and terrible. This sin admits of degrees of guilt. It is highly sinful to swear by the name of God lightly and vainly in our common discourses; though the oath be clipped, and half suppressed, or disguised in the pronunciation of it; which argues some remains of fear and shame in the sinner.

It is yet worse (and indeed not a jot below blasphemy) to swear by any other name, than the name of God: For in so doing, they attribute to a creature the sovereign and incommunicable property of God, set that creature in the very throne of God, and invest it with the regalities of his omniscience, to know our hearts, and almighty power, to avenge the wrong upon us, done to himself, as well as to men, by false-swearing.

But to break in rudely and blasphemously upon the sacred and tremendous name of God, with bold and full-mouthed oaths, striking through his sacred name with direct contumelious blasphemies; this argues an heart, from which all fear of God is utterly expelled and banished.

Yet some there are, grown up to that prodigious height of impiety, that they dare assault the very heavens, and discharge whole vollies of blasphemies against the glorious Majesty which dwells there. They are not afraid to bid defiance to him, and challenge the God that made them, to do his worst. They deck and adorn (as they account it) their common discourses with bloody oaths, and horrid imprecations; not reckoning them genteel and modish without them. It consists not with the greatness of their spirits, to be wicked at the common rate. They are willing to let the world know, that they are none of those puny, silly fellows, that are afraid of invisible powers, or so much cowards, as to clip a full-mouthed oath, by suppressing, or whispering the emphatical sounding syllable; but think an horrid blasphemy makes the most sweet and graceful cadency in their hellish rhetoric.

They glory, that they have fully conquered all those troublesome notions of good and evil, virtue and vice, heaven and hell, to that degree, that they can now affront the divine Majesty to his very face, and not fear the worst he threatens in his word against their wickedness.

If there be a God, (which they scarce believe) they are resolved, audaciously to provoke him to give them a convincing evidence of his being. And if he be (as they are told he is)

rich in patience and forbearance, they are resolved to try how far his patience will extend, and what load of wickedness it is capable to bear.

If their damnation be not yet sure enough, they will do their utmost to make it sure, by breaking down the only bridge whereby they can escape damnation: I mean, by trampling under their feet the precious blood and wounds of the Son of God, and imprecating the damnation of hell upon their own souls, as if it slumbered too long, and were too slow-paced in its motions towards them. I am of opinion, there are few Christians to be found on earth, crying so often, *Lord, pardon; Lord, save me;* as some wretches among us cry, (*I tremble to speak it!*) *God damn me; the devil take me.*

Herein they seem to envy the happiness of the devils, and damned wretches in hell, and endeavour (as one speaks) to snatch damnation out of God's hands before the time; as if they could not be soon enough among their roaring and howling companions, in the midst of the everlasting burnings. But, why such haste to be perfectly miserable? The very devils themselves deprecate torments before their time, though you imprecate them. Your misery makes haste enough towards you; you need not quicken it, or thus run to meet it.

I am perswaded, that if the bars of the bottomless pit were broken up, and devils should ascend in human shapes, none among them would be found hastening upon themselves the fulness and completeness of their misery, as you do. It is a truth, though a strange one, that it is much easier to find, than imagine men upon earth professing Christian religion, yet in some respect sunk below the wickedness of the diabolical nature, by making damnation both the subject of their drollery, and the object of their very wishes and desires. Some greater masters of our language, may more lively and emphatically express the horrid nature of this sin; but excuse me, reader, if I believe, no words or thoughts can measure the height or depth of this monstrous abomination.

§ 4. Such contumelious language as this (especially when grown modish or common) cannot but be a most high and dreadful provocation of God, and such an one as will certainly bring down his desolating vengeance, not only upon the heads of blasphemers themselves, but upon the states and kingdoms that connive at, or tolerate them. We read, Zech. v. 2, 3, 4. of a flying roll, full of curses, the length thereof twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits; which shall enter into the house of the swearer, remain in the midst of his house,

and consume it with the timber and stones thereof. Blasphemy and profane swearing, are like barrels of gunpowder laid under the foundation of many great and noble familes, many of which are already blown up, and laid in ruins by this sin, and many more ready to follow, as soon as the justice of God shall give fire to it.

And (comparatively speaking) it were happy if the mischief ended here; but, alas! it causes God to commence a quarrel with the whole land; Hos. iv. 2, 3. "And because of oaths, "the land mourneth." You find in Isa. xxxviii. what it was that brought that unparalleled desolation upon that famous and flourishing city of Jerusalem, and the whole land of Judah; "for Jerusalem is ruined, and Judah is fallen; because "their tongues and their doings are against the Lord, to pro-"voke the eyes of his glory."

But, alas! scripture-threatnings signify scarce so much with these men, as the predictions of the weather in an almanack; and, which is strange to consider, the very execution of scripture-threatnings before their eyes, will not terrify them from this inhuman wickedness; even these also are laughed to scorn, or easily forgotten.

Oh! that God would set it home with power, upon the spirits of all that are in power, to take some speedy and effectual course, to remove this accursed thing, this iniquity to be punished by the judge; one (and a chief one too) of those direful provocations of heaven, to which we owe a special part of our national infelicity at this day. We all acknowledge, that all prosperity and success depends upon God; if so, reason will readily own, that it must be therefore the interest of kingdoms and commonwealths, to prevent and restrain those impieties, which so audaciously provoke and incense his wrath. As much is this their duty and interest, as it is the interest of a courtier to avoid offences of his royal master, the king, upon whose favour his honour and preferment depends: Or as it is the duty of the owner, to keep in that ox which is used to goring; or cover that pit into which some have, and others of his family are like to fall: or carefully and speedily to remove that gunpowder, which his enemies have placed under the foundation of his house, to blow it up. Both reason and experience will inform the rulers of this world, that professed rebels to the God of heaven, are never like to make useful subjects in the kingdoms of men.

§ 5. Until public justice lay hold upon such offenders, let us try what close reasoning may effect, for their reformation.

It is hard to imagine that men of ſenſe ſhould ſo generally, and ſo far engage themſelves in this courſe of profane ſwearing, and have nothing at all to ſay for themſelves.

If they have no reaſon at all, to offer in juſtification or excuſe of what they do, they act the brutes, not the men, and are ſelf-condemned already.

It is a queſtion with me, whether the ſoul of man, on this ſide hell, can ſink ſo deep into the nature of a devil, as to ſin becauſe he will ſin; or to engage himſelf in a courſe of ſin, without any reſpect at all to ſome carnal intereſt, either of profit, pleaſure, or honour?

The thief hath a viſible temptation of gain to allure him, or pinching neceſſity, to induce him. The liar is drawn in, to commit that ſecond ſin, to cover the ſhame and turpitude of a former. The adulterer promiſeth himſelf pleaſure in the ſatisfaction of his luſts. And though men generally ſtand amazed to think, what that temptation ſhould be, which prevails upon the ſwearer; yet doubtleſs, ſomething there is he hath to plead in excuſe and extenuation of his fault. Whatſoever it be, let it be produced, and weighed in the balance of right reaſon; *Valeat quantum valere poteſt*, Let it have its due value and conſideration. And could I imagine any thing more likely to be their inducements, than what I ſhall here mention, I would not conceal them. There are only four things, that can fall within the compaſs of my imagination, pleadable by them, when ſeriouſly charged with the evil of the fact.

1. Some of them will haply tell us, that they would not ſwear as they do, if they could gain credit to what they ſay without it; but the incredulity of others, provokes them to add ſo many oaths to their ſingle affirmations.

2. Others of them will tell us, they only ſwear in their paſſion, when provoked by injuries received from others; and if men did not wrong them, they would not wrong God as they do.

3. Some will plead, that ſwearing is become modiſh, the badge and character of a gentleman; that it gives them reputation among men of their own rank and quality; and that they ſhall be looked upon as ſneaking fools, unfit for the company of gentlemen, if they could not diſcourſe with them in this dialect.

4. And ſome will confeſs the practice is evil; but that they have gotten ſuch an ill habit, and the ſin is become ſo cuſtomary with them, that many times they know not whether they ſwear or no.

I cannot imagine, nor (I think) they themselves, what else is pleadable in excuse, or extenuation of this horrid sin: Let these that are produced, have a fair trial at the bar of reason; and carry yourselves towards this sin for ever hereafter, according to that righteous verdict yourselves shall be forced to pass upon it.

§ 6. To begin with the first plea. You say, you would not swear as you do, could you gain credit to your words without it. Weigh this question in the upright balance of thine own reason, whether any wise or sober man in the world, will find himself ever the more obliged to believe what you say, by the addition of blasphemous oaths and imprecations, to your plain and simple affirmations or negations. I cannot think, that you yourselves would give the more credit to any man, that should profess his sincerity to you, by finding him, in that his very profession, false and treacherous to his God. Say, reason, dost not thou take this for a sure truth; that he who makes no conscience of being true to God, will never make much conscience of being false to men? For what is that which gives any man's words reputation among wise and sober men, but the supposition of his integrity, and conscientious fear of his deceit and guile? Take away that, and with it you take away the credibility of all his reports and affirmations.

If I look upon the person that speaks, as a man of integrity and conscientious tenderness, I have a sufficient ordinary security of the truth of what he saith. But if I look upon him as a man of a prostitute and seared conscience, that dares venture upon any sin; a man, in whom there is no awe of God, to produce veracity in his words; then my reason presently concludes, that where there is no truth, there ought to be no trust: For truth is the very ground-work and foundation of trust. Now, what truth can we suppose to be left in that man that sticks not, upon any trivial occasion, to break asunder all the obligations of a creature to his Creator; together with all the bonds of kindness, his great and best benefactor hath bound him withal; and without any the least injury he can pretend his God hath done him, to fly in his very face with the most contumelious language? Can we suppose any truth to be in, or any trust to be due to such a man as this?

Good men and bad are thus contradistinguished, Eccl. ix. 2. "Him that sweareth, and he that feareth an oath." A conscientious man is so afraid of an oath, that he would rather

chuse to die, than swear some kind of oaths: And though he be satisfied of the lawfulness of an oath in general, and of the matter of that oath he sweareth in particular; yet an holy awe and fear of God fills his heart, when he swears lawfully and necessarily, lest he should fail in the manner of it, by not giving that due reverence to the name of God, which so sacred and solemn an action requires.

But from profane swearing, and blaspheming the name of God, every man's reason may justly and plainly infer this conclusion; that the fear of God, is not in that man's heart. And where there is no fear of God, what truth can be supposed in him; or what trust can be due to his words or oaths? But the more he swears, still the less reason all wise men have to believe him. And I am sure, the credulity of fools adds little reputation to him. This plea therefore, for profane swearing, is altogether shamed, baffled, and cashiered, by the common reason of mankind.

§ 7. Call therefore to the bar of reason the second plea, or apology, for profane swearing.

You say, you swear not, unless provoked by injuries men have done you.

This is so weak a plea for so great a sin, that I wonder men are not ashamed to bring it into the court of reason. This is the true sense, and strength of it: My enemy hath abused me; therefore I will avenge the wrong my enemy hath done me, upon my best friend and benefactor. I challenge you to give but the colour, or shadow of sound reason, why, upon any abuse you have received from men, you should fall so injuriously upon the name of God, who never abused or injured you, since he gave you a being, but hath always done you good. Tell me, man, (if thou have the reason of a man in thee) what wrong hath God done thee? Wherein hath he injured thee, that thou thus wreakest thy revenge upon him? If an enemy have affronted you, reason would tell you, you ought not to take revenge for it, upon your friend, and best benefactor. Have you none but God to abuse, when men abuse and injure you? Can your reason comprobate and allow such an action as this? Satan instigates the corruptions of men to injure you; and you fly in the face of God for it, whose laws severely prohibit such actions, and will avenge the injuries done unto him. Speak no more therefore for ever, in the way of excusing the horrid sinfulness of this fact against God, upon the account of injuries done thee by thy fellow-creature.

The case is plainly determined, and cast over the bar of reason with contempt and abhorrence.

§ 8. Come we next to your third excuse, or plea; That *swearing is become modish, and gives you a great reputation among men of your own rank and quality; and that you shall be looked upon as sneaking fellows, unfit for the society of gentlemen, if you did not discourse with them in their own dialect.*

This apology for sin is of no late date: Salvian mentions it as far back as his own time: Profane persons then * thus pleaded for themselves, that they were compelled to be evil, lest they should be accounted vile.

Whether there be any weight in this apology for swearing, will quickly appear, now it is to be laid in the balance of true reason.

1. And first of all, let us consider what makes a true gentleman; and whether profane swearing have any place in his true character and description. † A gentleman, is one that springs from famous and renowned ancestors, and degenerates not from their probity and honour.

This is the man, whom the Latins call *generosus*, and we, a gentleman: Because we suppose a man of such an extraction and education, more gentle, affable, and condescending to inferiors, and to keep a stricter government over his tongue and passions, than rude plebians are wont to do. Upon this account, the poet rightly observes,

Quo major est quisquis, magis est placabilis ira,
Et facilis motus mens generosa capit.

Men of genteel extraction and education, are persons, whose passions are supposed to move more gently than other mens: And if at any time they be moved disorderly, yet are they more placable, and sooner reduced, than those of sordid and baser spirits are.

It is virtue which raises and ennobles families at first; for *omnis sanguis concolor*, all human blood is derived from, and equally tainted by Adam. Nobler, and baser blood, is an after-difference, made by virtue and vice among men. And as virtue first ennobled, and raised some families above others, so it will still continue the line of honour in their posterity: And as their virtues shall increase, so will their honour proportionably do.

* *Malè esse coguntur, ne viles habeantur.*

† *Generosus, nobilis, ex praeclaro genere ortus, qui a genere non defleclit.*

The case truly and plainly standing thus; it is morally impossible, to make debauchery the proper badge and character of gentility. For men of eminency (above the vulgar) are more obliged than they, to shun all base and sordid actions: And as their honour increaseth, so do their obligations to temperance and sobriety increase, and strengthen upon them proportionably.

It was therefore a right and rational observation of Hierotine; *I see nothing desirable in nobility*, (saith he) *but this; that such men are bound by a certain kind of necessity, not to degenerate from, or stain the glory and honour of their renowned ancestors.* And the reason is strong and evident: For virtue being that which first differenced their blood from others, they are obliged, by all the value they have for the honour of their blood and families, to shun those vices which stain that honour and dignity. And what vice can dishonour and debase them more, than profane swearing? For if the arms of many noble families have been reversed, for treason against the king; it is irrational to imagine, that treason against the King of kings, should add a new mark of honour: And what is blasphemy, but treason against God? It is plain then, from the true rise and character of a gentleman, profane swearing neither first raised, nor can preserve and continue, but rather blots and expoſes their reputation and honour.

2. Though I am most willing to pay a becoming deference to all persons of noble and genteel extraction, yet, in faithfulness to their true honour, I am here obliged to say, (and in saying it, I can offend no man that hath a true sense of honour) that their natural descent can never give them so much honour, as the vices I am here censuring will reflect ignominy and dishonour upon them. To be a slave of Satan, and your own lusts, is such a mark of infamy, as all the honourable and illustrious titles in the world can never cover. It is better to rise by virtue to honour, from contemptible parents, than by vice and profaneness, to grow contemptible from honourable parents. It is your honour to have many servants at your command, obsequiously attending a nod of your head, or a beck of your finger: But ask your own reason, gentlemen, whether it be not a greater dishonour, for you to attend as obsequiously yourselves upon every beck and nod of Satan, and your own lusts?

Were your natural birth once ennobled by the new birth, you would be more than thrice honourable, grace would make you more illustrious, than your natural extraction doth, or

can do. Or if morality (which is far inferior to that honour, and for which Heathens themselves have been renowned in the Pagan world) did but adorn and beautify your conversations; though it cannot entitle you to heaven, or secure to you the glory of the world to come; yet it would make you shine in the eyes of men in this world, and taking its advantage from your honourable extraction, make you differ from persons of an inferior rank, as stars of a greater magnitude and lustre. I hope, gentlemen valuing themselves upon their honour, will not be offended at a sharper invective than this, against those vices that darken and eclipse their honour, both in the eyes of God, as well as in the judgment of all wise and good men.

3. Suppose what you say to be true, that some profane gentlemen should scoff and deride you, for your sober carriage, and decorum language, (things which ought to be inseparable from true gentility) I would in this case appeal to your own reason, why you should not enjoy your own pleasure in as full latitude and liberty, as they do theirs? They delight in the dialect of devils; you, in pure and inoffensive language. If they will drink the puddled waters, and you refuse them for the pure chrystal streams; you have, to be sure, as much reason (and a thousand times more) to assert your liberty to be virtuous, than they have (or can pretend to have) a privilege to be vicious.

And if they will be offended with you for this, their offence is groundless in themselves, and will be greatly advantageous to you. For you need not doubt but you may find better company than theirs any where on this side hell. I remember that rational and excellent apology, which Tertullian made for the Christians in his time against the Gentiles: 'Wherein (saith he) do we offend you, if we will not partake with you in your delights? If we sustain any damage by such our refusal, the injury can be only our own: We reject your pleasures, and you are not delighted with ours.'

You will shew yourselves true and worthy gentlemen, in abandoning and rejecting (upon so noble an account as this) all further unnecessary society with such gentile-men; for so they deserve to be called, rather than gentlemen. They boast, indeed the honour of their blood, whilst they trample the precious and invaluable blood of Christ, under their feet: They boast their eminency above the vulgar, whilst mean time they labour vilely to debase him that set them there.

I am sure there is not a devil in hell, but is by nature of a more honourable and illustrious house, than the proudest of

blasphemers. They are angels by nature, though devils by practice. They have little reason to boast of their original excellency, which now aggravates their misery. Sin darkned their lustre, degraded them from their natural dignity; and so it will do theirs also, that imitate devils in their blasphemy and malignity against God.

4. It may as easily be proved as asserted, that to make cursing, swearing, and blaspheming, the badges and characteristical marks of a true gentleman, is the foulest blot and mark of infamy, which the malice of their enemies can devise to put into their escutcheons; and such an affront, as ought to be highly resented by all true gentlemen.

Should the most malicious enemy you have in the world, fee an herald to devise a mark of infamy for your coats of arms, to make you ridiculous, and a by-word among the people; he could never dishonour you at that rate, you this way dishonour yourselves.

For if debauchery be both asserted and allowed to be the true badge of gentility, then your own reason will infer, that all the ancient epithets of gentility ought thereupon to be altered. And would those gentlemen, think you, take it well, to have the titles, and epithets of ingenious, worthy, honourable, and noble, changed into cursing, swearing, damning, blaspheming gentlemen? You cannot but see the inconsistency of both. If, therefore, you will adopt and wear the latter, you must either cashier and renounce the former, or try to make the former consistent with the latter, which I am sure the most ingenious among you will find an hard task to do.

5. I humbly beg leave to propound one plain blunt question to you, gentlemen. The matter of it is too rational to be rejected, and let that make atonement for the blunt manner of its proposal. And the question is this:

Quest. *Whether your reason and conscience be fully satisfied, that when you die (as you know you shortly must), you shall then appear before the judgment-seat of God, in the quality and character of gentlemen? Do you verily think you shall find the more favour there, for the sake of your noble descent, and honourable extraction, or that your gentility shall make an atonement for all your impiety?*

I am persuaded, gentlemen, you do not; you cannot think so. You know you must appear before that God, with whom there is no respect of persons; a God that will certainly damn the impenitent blasphemer. The man must assuredly go to

hell, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. And if the man be damned, certainly the gentleman is in a bad case.

6. In a word, I am past all doubt, and so may you too, that this genteel mode of swearing, drinking, and whoring, which hath spread so far in this present infamous age, into Protestant states and kingdoms, is the very spirit and strength of a Popish plot, subtlely projected, and industriously managed, for their effectual reduction to Popery.

For nothing in the world can reconcile men to Popery; yea, and even endear them to it, like debauchery. Under Popery, gentlemen may come up to the rates of costly pardons and indulgences, for their greatest sins. They may give themselves liberty to wallow in profaneness all the days of their life. They may give their lusts the utmost scope and liberty, and yet have a plenary pardon when they die. So that they need not abridge themselves of any sinful liberty, or boggle at the loudest blasphemy, whilst they have that in their pocket to still and quiet something that grumbles in their bosom. Do you not see, gentlemen, the natural tendencies of these things? Does not debauchery look like a shoeing-horn to Popery.

Besides, gentlemen, the devil and the Pope are confederates in a farther design upon you; and if their design hit, they hope to win by power, what they may miss by policy; and that by the very same method of corrupting and debauching persons of eminent rank and quality, in Protestant kingdoms and commonwealths. For (as a * learned man in queen Elizabeth's days rightly observed) these are the men especially interested in the public affairs of kingdoms. These represent the people in parliaments. These make their laws, administer the government in peace and war. To their hands are committed the great concerns of nations. These are they that fill the seats of public judicature.

* Who manages the reins of government, who is present at, and presides over, both private and public matters, but persons of eminent rank and quality? Who moderates in the Senate, presides in courts, commands at home and abroad? Chief men and nobles surely. Who commands and countermands, acts and overacts, manages and canvasses all affairs, who makes laws and rescinds them, who governs the state in time of peace, and commands the forces in time of war; but great men and nobles? No wonder that the management of public affairs be committed to him, who by personal merit and renown of his ancestors hath recommended himself to the good report and esteem of mankind. *Humphred* on nobility.

If gentlemen, therefore, by this means be generally corrupted and infected by debauchery, their influence and example is likely to infect the greatest part of the body politic; and either make the people easily pliable to the charms and courtships of Popery, for the reason before-mentioned; or so besot their excellent parts, and enervate their masculine courage, that they shall fall an easy prey to their (otherwise) weak and despicable enemies.

And certainly, gentlemen, we have all cause to reckon this plot very far advanced, when we shall see debauchery every where made the badge of gentility; and chastity, temperance, and sobriety, become the marks and notes of infamy. When civility itself shall be hissed with derision out of some gentlemens company; and the more temperate and sober any man is, by so much the less fit to be a gentleman's companion.

By this time I hope you are convinced, that true gentility is no enemy to sobriety, nor debauchery the character of gentility; and will at last pardon, if not thank me, for endeavouring this way to secure the true honour of some, whilst I rationally argue down the vices and follies of others. This plea for debauchery, you see, hath the same fate the former had, and deserves never to be mentioned more.

§ 9. There is but one plea more; and that as silly and irrational as any of the former: and that is,

The custom and habit of swearing, which you say is hard to be broken. This sin is become so customary to you, that now you scarce note or observe it in yourselves.

That there may be truth in the matter of this plea, I neither deny nor doubt; but that it is a rational and allowable plea, will never be granted by your own reason. The thing you say may be true; for we sometimes find, that when you are taxed for swearing, you will presently swear that you did not swear; and curse him to his face, that accuses you for cursing.

But pray, gentlemen, make your own reason judge, whether custom be a valid and allowed plea for profane swearing and cursing. Say, reason, wilt thou allow that one of the highest aggravations of sin, is pleadable in thy court for the excuse and extenuation of it? Wilt thou give it under thy hand, that the man, is the less gilty, because the more wicked? Darest thou to warrant it that God will take the less notice of the wrongs men do him, because they are used and accustomed so to wrong and abuse him every hour in the day? If your reason can allow

and warrant this, I must say it is different, yea, and opposite to the common reason of mankind.

Say not, I make my own reason the rule and standard of yours, or other mens. For I argue here (as I have done all along before) upon the common topics and maxims of reason, generally allowed all the world over by mankind. If a practice be evil, the oftener it is repeated, the more still it is aggravated.

To be plain and faithful with you, gentlemen, if it be your custom to blaspheme, it is God's custom to damn blasphemers. If you use to be drunk and unclean, God uses to punish drunkards and adulterers (if impenitent and unreformed) with his everlasting wrath.

And when you are cited (as shortly you must be) before the awful tribunal of the great, the just, and the terrible God, ask but yourselves, whether such a plea as this, be like to excuse you in whole, or in part, and take off the heinousness of these horrid impieties? Will your profane oaths, and direful execrations and imprecations, be excused in the least degree, by telling him, Lord, I was so accustomed to blaspheme thy name; cursing, swearing, and damning, were so familiar language in my lips from day to day, that I had quite lost the sense of the action, as well as of the evil thereof; and therefore, Lord, pity, spare and have mercy on me: O damn not my soul to thine everlasting wrath. For though I have imprecated it upon myself, yet frequent custom at length extinguished all my sense and conscience of the evil thereof, till at length I could play with a direful imprecation as an harmless thing; nay, thought it an ornament and grace to my speech, a gallant expression, alamode the times and places I lived in.

Is not this as good a plea, and not a jot better than that of a malefactor upon his trial for life and death, when theft or robbery have been evidently and substantially proved upon him, and the judge demandeth, What he hath to say for himself, why sentence of death should not pass upon him? Mercy, my Lord, mercy cries he! for I have been so used and accustomed to filching and thieving from my youth up, that for some years before I was apprehended, every one's goods and cattle seemed to me to look like my own; so that I scarce knew when I stole, and when I did not.

And thus, gentlemen, you have heard a fair trial of the sin of profane swearing, and imprecations of damnation; and you have heard the verdict of your own reason and conscience

upon the case. The Lord help you to break off and reform that sin, for which there is not one word of apology or excuse now left in your mouths.

Let me close all I have to say upon this head, with one plain question: Do you think you must die, or live here for ever, as you now do? If you are convinced (as all the living are supposed to be) that you must die, do you desire an easy and comfortable, or a painful and terrible death? I presume there is no man living, that is convinced he must die, but desires naturally and rationally an Εὐθανασίαν, as easy and comfortable a dissolution as may be. If so, I appeal to your reason, whether profane swearing and blaspheming the name of God, be a proper rational way to obtain peace and comfort at death? With what hope or encouragement can those tongues of yours cry at death, Lord, have mercy upon me, which have profaned that name, and imprecated damnation from him, till you came into your last extremities, which convinced you, you could live no longer.

It is a serious question, and well worth a cool and solemn debate in your own reasons and consciences. Some of you are more immediately exposed to the dangers of death than others, readily to be disbanded by a bullet. If you fall, you must either fall considerately, or inconsiderately. If inconsiderately, and without any sense or conscience of this horrid guilt, you die impenitently, and consequently desperately and miserably. If considerately, and with awakened consciences, I demand, whether such guilt as this will not roar louder than the peals and vollies of those great and small guns do which breathe destruction upon you, and round about you? I have done my message plainly and faithfully to the very face of your reason and conscience; and if for my faithfulness and zeal, both for God's honour and yours, I am rewarded with your curses; yet, if you would forbear to blaspheme and rend in pieces the name of God, I shall not much regard the obloquy and reproach my name shall undergo and suffer upon that account: But I expect from you better fruit than this.

CHAP. IV.

Wherein reason and conscience are again consulted about the practice of drunkenness; and their righteous and impartial censure given upon that case.

§ 1. THOUH our souls and bodies be of vastly different natures and originals, yet they do clasp and embrace each other with most dear and tender affection. It is marvellous to behold such a spiritual and heavenly creature as the soul in all men, fervently loving, and in most men fondly doting upon a lump of clay, a clod of earth: it sympathizeth tenderly with it. If the meanest member of the body be in pain, the soul is presently concerned for it, and evidences itself to be so, by commanding the eyes both to watch and weep, the tongue to complain and moan, the hands to bind up its wounds with all imaginable tenderness, and carefully defend it from the least injurious touch. But if the whole be in danger, how do its nobler faculties of understanding, memory, and invention, awaken and bestir themselves to the uttermost for its deliverance and safety.

Whilst the soul lives in union with the body, it is filled with assiduous (and too often with exorbitant and distracting) cares, for its necessary support and comfort. And when it must be separated from it by death, what strong aversations to death doth it ordinarily discover? The strong ties and bonds betwixt it and the body, cannot be loosed without much conflict and struggling, evidenced by these emphatical groans it sends forth: groans which other men understand not, nor can be supposed to understand, till they themselves come to feel the parting-pull.

The reason of all which lies in the intimate relation which is betwixt these different natures, which God hath married together in the womb, from which time they have been companions and partners in all the comforts and troubles of life. The body is the soul's house in which it dwells, and still shall dwell, till death dissolve it. It is the soul's garment, that clothes and covers it. It hath worn this garment of flesh from the beginning, and is to wear it still, till sickness hath brought it to rags, and death stript it from the soul.

It is the tool and instrument by which it doth all its works,

whilst it is in this state of composition; and therefore the soul cannot but love it fervently. No man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it.

§ 2. The case so standing betwixt the soul and body, the wisdom or folly of the soul is plainly discovered in its way and manner of governing the body, as the love and prudence of an husband is in the government of his wife, or the master in ordering the affairs of his house; or the neat breeding of a man, in the comely wearing of his garments; or the skill and care of an artificer, in the brightness, keeness, and sharpness of his tools.

Some husbands give evidence to the world of their governing prudence and ability, in such an allowance of liberty to their wives, as the laws of conjugal love require, and their estates and incomes will conveniently bear, and no more; and in restraining their extravagancies, as well as by encouraging their virtuous courses, in keeping back no due encouragement to virtue, nor giving the least encouragement unto vice.

A well-bred man, that carries with him a becoming sense of his quality, and the decorum he ought accordingly to observe, will wear his garments decently, and becoming his rank; they shall be sure to be neat and clean, and sit fit and comely upon his body. He abhors to wear a garment tumbled in the mire, and go like a beast, without regard to his reputation.

No prudent owner and governor of an house, will let the rain drop through the roof, nor choak up the passage to his door with a nasty dunghill. His house within shall be neat, and not nasty: the rooms clean and comely: and yet abhors to suffer superfluous ornaments, and costly vanities, to swallow up his estate that should maintain it, and bring bailiffs (more odious than a dunghill) to his very doors.

The curious artificer, neither grinds away the substance of his instruments to make them bright and glittering, and set an hedge too fine to hold one minute's use; nor yet suffers them to be thrown aside in some neglected corner, where rust and flaws shall render them utterly useless, or make him blush at the botches such instruments will cause in his work.

The prudent husbandman will neither break the heart of his ground for want of rest and compost, nor yet overload it with dressings which brings forth nothing but rank and useless weeds; he will in a fit season turn in a stream of water to his meadows, like a cordial-draught to fainting spirits; but will not drown it, and rot the very roots of his grass, by letting in too much, or by suffering it to lie under water too long.

He will feed his horse high enough to perform his journey, and carry him through the mire; but will not feed him to such a height, that the rider shall neither be able to sit, nor command him.

In all these cases, the common prudence of every man directs him to that just mediocrity, wherein both his honour and profit do apparently lie. And what we say in such common cases and concerns as these, is as true, and much more excellent in the soul's prudent government of its own body, unto which it was espoused in the womb, and is its dear and constant partner, both in the present and future good or evil. It is the garment it wears, the instrument it useth, and the field it cultivates. It must neither deny the body those necessary supports and comforts which God and nature allow it, nor yet surfeit and overcharge it with more than it is able to bear. In either of these extremes, the extreme folly of the soul is discovered.

§ 3. Now the dethroning of reason, and frequent oppressions of nature, by the practice of drunkenness, is the highest exaltation of folly in the soul of man; plainly manifesting its ignorance and inability to order and govern the body, to which it is married by a vital union.

Here is a foolish soul by misgovernment, dishonouring and destroying its vigorous and comely body, under a pretence of love and kindness to it. We account it one of the greatest outward infelicities in this world, incident to a discreet and virtuous woman, to be headed and governed by a sottish fool, neither able to govern himself, or her, nor give a reason of his own actions or commands. A man whose folly shall make her blush in all sober companies he comes into, and forces her upon such a course of life as she perfectly abhors, and will bring speedy ruin upon her; all men pity such a case as this. And this is the very case of many a comely, vigorous body.

Only such a woman hath two reliefs under her bondage, which the body of a drunkard wants. She can sometimes withdraw and retire from his company, and enjoy the relief of her solitude, which the wretched body of a drunkard cannot do, till death; but is tied day and night to the company of its foolish soul, which is frequently abusing it, and imposing upon it.

Besides, such a woman may haply overlive her vicious abusive husband, and spend many a comfortable year in the world with a more discreet, sober and religious partner of her life, whose sobriety, discretion, piety, and love, shall make

full compenſation for all thoſe years of miſery and ſlavery ſhe endured before. But the caſe before us admits no ſuch relief: for as long as ever the body lives and breathes, the ſoul is, and muſt be with it, and in it. And though death will for a time ſeparate and divorce them, yet the body's ſecond marriage at the reſurrection, can be with no other but the ſame ſoul which oppreſſed and ruined it in this world. And this ſecond marriage will be far worſe than the firſt; for though it were the ſottiſh ſoul's ſlave and drudge in this world, and ſuffered many a ſickneſs, ſhame, and loſs by its folly; yet in the world to come, it muſt be its partner and companion in hell-torments for evermore, inaſmuch as it was the inſtrument the ſoul uſed in moſt of thoſe ſins committed by it in this world. And this is the caſe of all bodies married to, and governed by ſouls that have neither reaſon nor religion enough prudently and ſoberly to order and govern their own bodies.

§ 4. Sad and doleful, therefore, are the lamentations and complaints of the bodies of drunkards, againſt the folly and tyranny of their ſouls; and as juſt as ſad. Let me here therefore act the part of an advocate for your bodies, which is a part of yourſelves, and to which, by the law of nature, you owe love, care, and honour; or, rather by a *proſopopoeia*, let me bring in the body ſighing out its own complaints in the ears of its own ſoul, and thus bemoaning itſelf to it.

'Oh, my ſoul! I have cauſe to lament the day that ever I 'was married to ſuch a ſottiſh fool as thou art, who are de-'ſtitute both of wiſdom and love to rule and govern me. I 'may juſtly reſume Job's lamentation upon thy account, and 'ſay with him: "Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and 'the night wherein it was ſaid, there is a man-child conceiv-'ed. Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not give 'up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly? For now ſhould 'I have lien ſtill, and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept; then 'had I been at reſt."

'I have been a perfect ſlave and drudge to thy unreaſonable 'luſts and impoſitions. I was once an active, vigorous, come-'ly body, and hadſt thou been wiſe and ſober, I had been hap-'py. But thou haſt been a cruel tyrant to me, oppreſſing and 'loading me with more than I was able to ſtand under. Thou 'haſt plunged me many times into thoſe puddles of exceſs, 'wherein thou haſt drowned thy own reaſon, and my health. 'My well-mixed beauty is now turned into the colour of flam-'ing fire; my hands and legs ſhake, my tongue falters, my 'natural craſis and temperament is deſtroyed. Thou haſt

'made me miserable in this world, and intendest to make me 'more wretched in the world to come.

'Sober nature gave me my stint and measure. I knew when 'it was enough, and gave thee sufficient items and intimations '(amidst thy foolish frolics), that I could neither with honour 'or safety bear one glass more. But thou wast deaf to all my 'moans, and shewedst more mercy to thy horse than me. 'Sick or well, able or unable, live or die, I must take in the 'full number of cups and bottles thou enjoinedest me to take. 'Like another Pharoah, thou hast required of me the full tale, 'whether I had strength to perform it or no. Yea, like ano-'ther devil, thou hast sometimes cast me into fiery fevers, 'and watery dropsies; and will next cast me, if thou continue 'this course, into hell-fire itself.

'Other souls have set thee a better pattern in their more 'sober and prudent government of their bodies. They give 'their bodies the true pleasure of the creature, by keeping 'them to that happy mediocrity in which it consists. They 'devote their bodies to the service of God; thou hast devoted 'me to the immediate service of the devil. A majestic beau-'ty sits upon their faces; sottishness and folly upon mine. 'Their knees are daily bowed in prayer to God; mine shake 'and tremble in the service of the devil. They enjoy pure and 'sanctified pleasures every day; but I am denied the sober 'pleasures of a beast. Their bodies will be happy with their 'souls in the world to come; but I must suffer eternally with 'thee, and for thee. Thou hast both consumed me, and thy 'estate given to support me; and now I am like to suffer as 'much by want, as I have done by excess; and all this thro' 'thy misgovernment. These feet (if thou hadst pleased to 'command them) would as readily have carried thee to thy 'closet, or the assemblies of God's people, as to an ale-house 'or tavern. These fingers would have served to open and turn 'the blessed pages, which contain the oracles of God, as to 'cog a dye, or have shuffled and dealt a pack of cards. This 'tongue might have been melodiously employed in singing 'the praises of God among his people, as well as in swearing, 'roaring, and singing among drunken sots and fools, if thou 'hadst been endued with governing wisdom.

'Thou knowest I could do nothing without thee. Thou 'hast a despotical power over all my members. They are at 'thy beck, and thou at the devil's. Better had it been for me, 'had I been the body of a contemptible worm or fly, than a 'body animated and governed by such a sottish soul as thou art,

'And now, my soul, what hast thou to say for thyself? 'What tolerable account canst thou give to God or me, of 'these thy vile abuses of both?'

§ 5. Now let us hear what the soul of the drunkard hath to plead, in its own excuse and defence, for all his wrongs against God, mischief to itself, ruin to his health, name, and estate. They have various excuses, though not one sound or rational one among them all. Such as they are, let them be tried by the rule of reason, if any reason be yet left in them, who daily dethrone it by this worse than brutish practice.

That which they say for themselves, is this:

1. That their bodies are strongly constituted, more capacious to receive, and able to bear greater quantities of wine and strong-drink, than others are; and therefore, why should they not drink down, and glory over those that vie with them?

2. Others say, they would not take the course they do, but that when they are sober and solitary, they are so pressed with the thoughts of their debts and incumbrances in the world, that they are upon a perfect rack, and they find nothing like good-fellowship in a tavern or ale-house, so effectually relieving against the cares and anxieties of their minds.

3. Some will tell us, they are drawn into it by the snare of pleasure; nothing being so grateful to their palate, as their full load of generous wine, or strong drink. And seeing it is so pleasant and delightsome to them, why should they deny and abridge themselves of their pleasures?

4. Others will profess, they had never taken this course, which they find upon many accounts pernicious to them; but that they are not able in civility to deny their intimate friends and companions, especially such with whom they have concerns in trade and business; and they must drink as they do, or suffer loss in their trade; and beside that, be stigmatized for fanatics.

5. They will also say, they are obliged in point of loyalty, to pledge him that consecrates (as they catechretically call it) the first glass to the king, or persons of quality and honour.

6. And, lastly, Some will tell us, they have plentiful estates, that will bear such expences; and since their pockets are full, why should not their heads and stomachs be so too?

Besides these six apologies for drunkenness, nothing falls into my imagination, pleadable for this sin. We will weigh these that are pleaded, in the common balance of the reason of mankind, and try the validity of them one by one. And for *Excuse* I. And, first, To what you say of the capacities of

your bodies, strength and ability of your constitutions, to receive and bear greater quantities of wine and strong drink, than others can; and therefore, why should you not give proof of it, when challenged, and get reputation to yourselves, by drinking down, and glorying over such as vie with you?

To this I reply three things, which must be laid in the counter-balance; and let the balance be held in the upright hand of your own reason.

1. A strong and vigorous constitution will be readily acknowledged to be so great an external blessing and mercy, that no man of sound intellectuals ought to do any thing to destroy it; but is obliged to use all proper methods for the preservation of it. If therefore temperance shall be found to preserve it, and excess to impair and destroy it; let your own reason judge, which of these two courses you are obliged to take. Consult either the best physicians, or your own and other men's experience; and they will tell you, That apoplexies, palsies, gout, and innumerable other diseases are bred by such excesses, in the soundest and strongest constitutions, and death itself hastened by such intemperate courses; whereas temperance and sobriety might have made your lives more comfortable and durable. As strong as you are, frequent drunkenness will bring Cain's curse upon your vigorous bodies, and make you go shaking and trembling (as he did) about the world.

2. Let it be demanded of your own reason, whether it do really judge that God bestowed more strength and vigour upon your bodies, than he hath upon others, to arm a stronger enemy, than others are; to fight more vigorously against him, than others do, or can do? Or, whether it were not designed by him for greater use and service to his glory in the world, than others of his people (how willing soever they be) can do, for want of that strength you have? I am confident, no man of sound intellectuals will dare to assert the former, or deny the latter.

3. And, lastly, For your glorying in drinking down, and conquering others; you will certainly put your own reason to a blush, by offering such a plea as this to it. You are not yet arrived to impudence enough, to deny drunkenness to be a sin; and your reason is yet sound enough, easily and naturally to infer, that by how much the more any man exceeds and goes beyond others in sin, by so much the greater sinner that man is.

And as for the honour and glory you talk of, in exceeding

others in your abilities to drink; your reason will quickly make you ashamed of that glory; and prove, as well as assert it to be a mark of basest infamy.

Do you think, that Lombard was really honoured, or stigmatized, whom Tiberius Caesar dubbed a knight, for drinking off three gallons of wine at one draught, and surnamed him Tricongius, that is to say, the three gallon knight, which story * Pliny, in his Natural History, relates to the perpetual infamy of them both? Or think you, it added to the glory of Tiberius himself, who knighted this three gallon (not thrice gallant) knight, to have his name changed among the people, from Tiberius into Biberius; as afterward they did the name of that monster Nero, into Mero?

Gentlemen, I appeal to your own reason, if the vast continent you have within you for wine and strong drink, be really your honour; whether the butt or hogshead, whence you have it, be not, for the same reason, much more honourable than you? Your reason will plainly give the conclusion.

But, oh! consider not only what reason saith, but what God, the fountain of that reason, saith in Isa. v. 22. "Wo to "them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to "mingle strong drink." Methinks it should make you sit in as little ease upon the tavern, or ale-house bench, as that court-parasite sat at a rich banquet furnished with variety of dainties, and all sorts of generous wine; over whose head, Dionysius caused an heavy sword to be hanged, with the point downward, by a single hair every moment ready to drop perpendicularly upon it.

Excuse II. As for those that throw themselves into these excesses, on purpose to delude those anxious cares and thoughts, which cruciate and oppress them, whenever they are sober and solitary: I shall only propound three plain questions to the small remainders of reason in them, which yet I presume sufficient to determine rightly upon them.

Quest. 1. Whether they think that which greatly increaseth want and poverty, be a rational cure and proper remedy of it? And whether a jar of oil be not as fit to quench a flame, as tavern and ale-house scores and reckonings are to buoy up a sinking trade, and keep bailiffs from mens doors? Certainly none but a sottish fool can think it to be otherwise. Your own improvidence, or God's afflictive providence, have brought you into other mens books; and certainly you cannot think, if you be

* *Plin. Nat. Hist. l.* 14. *c.* 22.

in your wits, that chamberlains bills for so many bottles of wine, and flaggons of beer, will be accepted by your creditors for good bills, to quit your scores with them. Were you sober, frugal, and industrious, you would put yourselves thereby into a better way to obtain a blessing from God, and respects and forbearance from men, than in the course you now take.

Quest. 2. Nor can you, without manifest impudence, propound such a question as this to your own reason, whether the addition of injustice to profaneness, be a rational plea or excuse for it? And is not that the very case here? Whose money is that you so lavishly and prodigally waste, out of your consuming estates? It is either your creditors, or the small remains of your own. Whether the one or the other, methinks that wine and drink should not go down very pleasantly, which must be mingled with manifest injustice, or with the tears, and (in a sense) the blood of your wives and children. If your reasons can allow these things for lawful excuses, then you are excused, else self-condemned.

Quest. 3. I shall trouble your reason with the decision but of one question more, and it is briefly and plainly this:

Whether the addition of far greater troubles, or causes of troubles to the inner man, be a proper expedient to alleviate and ease the loads and burdens of your outward troubles already grown almost too heavy for you to bear.

I dare venture all that I am worth, upon sound reason's side, that it will never allow, or comprobate such an absurdity, as the affirmative part of this question draws along with it.

Believe it, sirs, all the outward necessities, cares and fears, which now oppress you upon the score of worldly affairs, (which frame not to your minds) are much more tolerable, and comparatively light and easy, to the stings, wounds, and lashes of a guilty conscience: But when all these inward troubles shall be superadded to your outward troubles, they will, in conjunction, make a burden too heavy for man to bear.

Whatever cares or troubles providence involves any good man in, in the honest and painful pursuit of his civil calling, he may in a great measure relieve his burdened spirit under them, by the comfortable testimony of his own conscience, and his free addresses to God in prayer. These will sweetly support him under his other entanglements and perplexities in the world. But the course you take, does not only strike away these props from under your minds; but doubles and

trebles the burden upon them. Were men but once acquainted with that relief and chearfulness of spirit, which a good conscience, and a spiritual address to God in prayer, afford in the midst of troubles, they would run to their closets, rather than to taverns and ale-houses, to divert and cure their troubles. I leave it therefore before your own reason to consider, what weight or validity there is in this second excuse for drunkenness.

Excuse III. Others plead they are drawn into this sin by pleasure and delight, whose charms are too strong for them to resist.

In this, as in all the former, I resolve to make you your own judges. Give me leave but to state the questions right, and let your own reason freely determine them. And what fairer dealing can men that exercise reason expect? And let the first question be this:

Quest. 1. Whether the pleasures of temperance do not far excel those of intemperance? If they do, then this your plea is vain and irrational: For you foolishly chuse a lesser pleasure, and refuse a greater and sweeter one. And that you do so in this case, no wise man can deny or doubt.

For temperate drinking refreshes the body, and no way burdens it, as excessive drinking doth: And that which burdens nature, can never be equally pleasant with that, which yields nothing but due refreshment. Temperance doth not vitiate; but raiseth the pure and ordinate appetite of nature to its just pitch and height; in which temper, and at which height, it is most capable of the sweetest pleasure from the creature. As the strings of a lute give us the sweetest and most delicious notes, when they are not let down too low, but are all fixed at their due height.

Temperance gives us the most pleasing enjoyment of the good things of this life, still leaving the mind free, and fit for the more spiritual and sweet enjoyments of a better and more excellent life; which excess never did nor can do.

Moreover, temperance maintains the manly grace and majesty of the countenance, but excess totally disguises it. It draws the lines of drunkards faces into a form much like those ridiculous Dutch pictures, which some set upon their chimney-pieces, to move laughter in those that behold them.

Now, by the vote of universal reason, that pleasure which refresheth the body, but no way burdens it, which raises the ordinate and unvitiated appetites of nature, to its just pitch and due height, which gives nature the sweetest refreshment,

leaving it always fitter and freer for higher and better pleasures, which maintains the manly grace and majesty of the countenance, and makes not a wise man look like a fool or an antic, must needs be better than the lower and flatter pleasures of a burdened body, and vitiated palate, which draw after them so great a train of present mischiefs (which temperance avoids), besides far heavier, and more durable ones in the life to come.

Quest. 2. But if the present pleasures of temperance were in some respect inferior to those of excess, (which I have proved they neither are, nor can be); I demand, in the second place, whether the loss of your honour and health, your time and estate, your present peace and future hopes, do not make such sensitive pleasures base and inferior, compared with those of temperance and sobriety? Do you, in good earnest, think a glass or two above what satisfies and refreshes nature, can recompence for all that shame, sickness, poverty, and guilt that follows it? If you think so, sin hath turned you into brutes, and made you utterly uncapable of all arguments and manly considerations, to reduce and recover you.

Excuse IV. You say, you would not haunt taverns and alehouses as you do, but that you are drawn in by company and business, which you cannot well resist or avoid, and should you do so, it would be to your loss; and besides that, you should be branded for fanatics.

I deny not, but there is a snare in vain company; yet give me leave to propound a few plain and easy questions to your reason.

Quest. 1. Why must the importunity of good fellows (as you call them) be an irresistible temptation to you, and deprive you of all power to deny them, whilst you discern the snares and mischiefs they draw you into? This seems to be a thing unaccountable to reason. Suppose you were allowed to spend the longest summer's day in the highest gratifications of all your senses together, or successively one after another, upon condition that you would endure the torments of the rack till that day twelvemonth came about again; do you think the importunity of all your intimates in the world, would prevail with you to accept the pleasures of a day under such a condition as this? And yet what are the torments of a year upon the rack, to the torments of hell for ever and ever? Or to come lower: Suppose one of those lewd companions not worth a groat, if every man had his own, should request you to lend him an hundred pound upon his own security, could you find

no power (think you) to deny him, especially if the loss of that hundred pound would certainly ruin you? If you would deny him (as I doubt not but in such a case you would) tell me then, why you should not find power to deny him, when he asks a far greater matter than an hundred pound, even the peace, purity, and safety of your souls, as well as the health of your bodies, and honour of your names? Why then should you be so easy and flexible when they ask the latter, and so stiff and unpersuadable to the former?

Quest. 2. You say, you have business, and concerns in trade, to dispatch in such places and companies, and this draws you into the snares of excess. I will not deny but men may lawfully transact their business in such places, and there may be a conveniency, and sometimes a necessity for it: But that is not the case. The question referred to the determination of your reason, is this, Why drunkenness must accompany business? And whether a man be not more fit to transact his business, and drive bargains of the greatest value, whilst his body, and mind are cool, sober, and temperate, than when his reason is beclouded and deposed by drunkenness? How many men have undone themselves, their wives and children, by drunken bargains?

Besides, I must tell you, that in all such drunken meetings, the devil comes to drive his bargain with you, as well as your other customers. He bids for your souls, and offers you such pleasures as you there find in exchange for them, and is content to make your dying day the time of your delivering them into his possession. How do you like such trading as this, gentlemen?

Quest. 3. You say, should you refuse to accompany them, and do as they do, you should be branded for fanatics. I would fain know, whether such a plea for drunkenness as this, doth not justly cast the greatest reproach of fanaticism upon yourselves, and set a mark of true honour upon those men whom the world unjustly stigmatizes with that title? Gentlemen, I do assure you, the fanatics (as you call them) have reason to thank you for the honour and justice you have done them, in acknowledging them to be none of the members of your hellish society, but persons of a more sober and honourable character. And I appeal to your reason, whether it would not be more for your honour, to wear the unjust title of a fanatic, than the just censure of a drunken sot.

Excuse V. You say, you are obliged in point of loyalty

to pledge him that consecrates the first glass to the health of the king, or any person of eminency. I leave it still to your reason to be judge,

1. Whether the king have cause to account the manifest breach of the laws by which he governs, to be a signal expression of his subjects loyalty to him? Is not his royal authority, his honour and safety in his laws? And is he not finely honoured, think you, by such drunken loyalty as this? Gentlemen, you have a king over you of sounder intellectuals, and more exemplary temperance and sobriety than to be thus imposed upon.

2. Can you think he reckons his health in the least degree advanced or secured by the ruin and subversion of his subjects health? No, no; did the genteelest drunkards in England enquire, they would quickly find, it would more please him if they would consult their own health better, and pray for his more sincerely and fervently than they do.

Excuse VI. Your last excuse is, that you have plentiful estates that will bear it; and since your pockets are full, why should your heads or stomachs be empty.

Quest. The only question I would here state, and leave your own reason to determine, is this, whether you think the experience of the redundancy and over-plus of your estates in excess and drunkenness, be the very end and design God aimed at, in bestowing those things with such a bountiful hand upon you? And whether the expence of it in this way, will please him as well, as if you cloathed the naked, and fed the hungry with it, and brought the blessings of them that are ready to perish, upon you and your families? Ah, gentlemen, you must come to a day of reckoning. Your reasons and consciences can never tell you, you can make up as comfortable an account with God, by setting down so many hundred pounds in wine and strong drink, more than was necessary or beneficial: *Item*, So many thousand pounds lost in play: So much upon whores; as if you set down so much to feed and cloath the naked and hungry. So that all your excuses for this sin are baffled by your own reason; and it was easy to conclude, that such a traitor to reason as drunkenness is, which hath so often dethroned it, could not possibly receive a more favourable judgment and sentence than this now given upon it.

Let all drunkards henceforth consider, what a voluntary madness the sin of drunkenness is, how it unmans them, and sets

them below the very brutes. A grave * father calls it rightly,

"A distemper of the head, a subversion of the senses, a tempest in the tongue, the storm of the body, the shipwreck of virtue, the loss of time, a wilful madness, a pleasant evil, a sugared poison, a sweet sin, which he that hath, hath not himself; and he that commits it, doth not only commit sin, but himself is altogether sin."

It is a sin at which the most sober Heathens blushed. The policy of the Spartans was more commendable than their piety in making men drunk, that their children might gaze upon them as a monster, and be feared for ever from such an horrid practice. He that is mastered by drunkenness, can never be master of his own counsels. Both reason and religion condemn this course. Make a pause therefore where you are, and rather throw that wine or beer upon the ground, which else will cast thy body upon the ground, and thy soul and body into hell.

CHAP. V.

Containing the result and issue of the third consultation with reason, upon the case of uncleanness; and the true report of the determination of every man's reason, with respect thereunto.

§ 1. THE bountiful and indulgent God hath made more abundant provision for the pleasure and delight of rational, than of brutal beings: And his wise and righteous laws order and limit their pleasures to their great advantage; his allowance under those restrictions being large and full enough. Both reason and experience assure us, that the truest pleasures are most freely and honourably to be enjoyed within the pale and boundary of his laws; and that there are none fit for the enjoyment of a man or Christian, to be found without, or beyond them.

That prudent owner provides best for his cattle, who puts

* *Turbatio capitis, subversio sensus, tempestas linguæ, procella corporis, naufragium virtutis, amissio temporis, insania voluntaria, blande daemon, dulce venenum, suave peccatum, quam qui habet, seipsam non habet, quam qui facit, peccatum non tantum facit, sed ipse totus est peccatum.*

them into inclosed fragrant fields, where they have plenty of proper and pleasant food, sweet and pure springs of water, the pleasant covert of shady trees, and all that is either necessary or convenient for them; altho' those fields be so inclosed within pales or walls, that they cannot stray without those boundaries, into other mens grounds, to be by them impounded, and brought back lank tired, and dirty, to their owner; or by straying into wastes and wildernesses, fall a prey (as stragglers use to do) to wolves and lions.

God envies not any true, rational, and proper pleasure to men or women; when he bounds them in by his command, within the allowance whereof, sufficient provision is made for the benefit and delight of propagation. And though it be all men's duty to tremble at the awful solemnity, yet it would be any man's sin to repine and murmur at the strictness and severity of his command, delivered with thunder and lightning from mount Sinai, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*. Man's honourable liberty, and God's wise and just restraint and limitation thereof, are both set together before our eyes, in that one scripture, Heb. xiii. 4. "Marriage is honourable in all, "and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers "God will judge." Here is a liberal allowance granted, and a severe punishment threatned for the inordinacies and exorbitancies of boundless and ungovernable lusts. God will judge with temporal judgments in this world; and upon impenitent persistents, with eternal judgments in the world to come.

§ 2. Such is the corruption of man's nature by the fall, that it hates inclosures, restraints, and limitations. These things which were intended to regulate, serve only to sharpen and enrage their sensual appetite. No fruit so sweet to corrupt nature, as forbidden fruit. *Nitimur in vetitum semper, cupimusque negata.* The very restraint of evil, makes it look like a pleasant and desirable good. Sons of Belial can endure no yoke of restraint. There is a great truth in that observation of the divine Herbert, That if God had laid all common, man himself would have been the inclosier. For his reason and experience would have plainly informed him of the great and manifold advantages of distinction and propriety. How many quarrels and barbarous murders have been occasioned by whores! which by keeping within God's bounds and rules, had been both honestly and honourably prevented.

Were men left to that liberty brutes are, to scatter their lusts promiscuously, fathers would not know their own children,

nor children their fathers; whereby both their duties and comforts would be prescinded together. Such mischiefs as these, would make men glad of that inclosure, which the laws of God have made for them. But behold with admiration the perverse wickedness of corrupt nature, manifested in this, that because God hath inclosed and secured their relations to them by his laws, (which inclosure is every way to their advantage); yet this makes their lusts the more head-strong and outrageous, and they cannot take that comfort in their own, because their own, that they think to find in another's, because another's.

Remarkable to this purpose is that * relation of Mr. Firmin's, which he received from his near relation, who was minister to the company of English merchants in Prussia. The consul, or governor of that company, being a married man, and that to a very proper and comely woman, was yet enslaved to others, not to be compared with his own wife for comeliness. This minister dealt with him about it. One argument he urged, was this: That of all men he had the least temptation, having a wife so comely, that few women were like her. He answered, yea, were she not my wife, I could love her. Had she been his whore, he could have loved her; he thought none like her; but because she was his wife, hedged in by God, he cared not for her. O what hearts have men, that they should ever think that to be best for them which is most cross to God! Why should stolen waters be sweeter than those of our own fountains?

§ 3. God's choice must needs be far better for us, than our own. Ordinate and lawful pleasures and enjoyments, are far better and sweeter, than exorbitant and forbidden ones. And the reason is evident and undeniable: For amongst all the operations of the mind, its reflex acts are the acts that best relish pleasure. And indeed, without self-reflection, a man cannot tell whether he delights or no. All sense of pleasure implies some reflection of the mind: And those pleasures of a man must needs be the sweetest, which afford the sweetest reflections upon them afterward; and those the basest pleasures, which are accompanied and followed with present regret, or the stinging and cutting reflections of the conscience upon them afterwards.

1. Lawful and ordinate enjoyments, are as honey without the sting. Forbidden pleasures, are embittered and extinguished by these regrets and reflections of the conscience. They are like those pleasant fruits, which the Spainards found in

* Real Christian, p. 60.

the Indies, which were sweet to the taste, but so environed, and armed on every side with dangerous briars and thorns, that they tore not only their cloaths off their backs, but the skin off their flesh, to come at them; and therefore they called them *comfits in hell.* And such are all forbidden, and unlawful pleasures.

A merchant (saith the fore-named author †) dining with the friars at Dantzick, his entertainment was very noble. After he had dined, and seen all, the merchant fell to commending their pleasant life. 'Yea, said one of the friars to him, we 'live gallantly indeed, if we had any body to go to hell for us 'when we die.' You see what mingles with mens sensual and sinful lusts.

2. Your honour is secured, by keeping within God's bounds and limits: *Marriage is honourable in all.* Here guilt can neither wrong your consciences, nor infamy your reputations. Fornicators and adulterers go up and down the world, as men burnt in the hand: Their conscience lashes them within; and men point at them abroad. They are a terror to themselves, and a scorn to men.

3. The health of the body is secured by chaste and regular enjoyments, but exposed to destruction the other way. God hath plagued the inordinacy of mens lusts, with most strange and horrid diseases. That Morbus Gallicus, Sudor Anglicus, and Plica Polonica, were judgments sent immediately by God's own hand, as the witnesses of his high displeasure, against the bold and daring contemners of his sacred and awful command. Thus, as Prov. v. 11. "They mourn at last, when their flesh "and body are consumed." Other sins are committed in the body; but this against it, as well as in it.

4. The blast and waste of our estates (which is the usual consequence of uncleanness) is prevented and avoided, by keeping within God's rules. The truth of what the scripture tells us, Prov. x. 5. is often exemplified before our eyes; that, "by reason of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a mor-"sel of bread." Adultery gives a man rags for his livery; it lodgeth his substance in the house of strangers, and entails wants and curses on him and his.

5. In a word, continence, or lawful marriage, exposes not the soul to the eternal wrath of God, as uncleanness doth; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. This sin does not only shut a man out of his

† Real Christian p. 63.

own house, and the hearts of good men, but out of heaven itself, without thorough repentance and reformation.

§ 4. The case standing thus; it is matter of just admiration, how the sin of uncleanness should grow so epidemical and common as it doth, seeing such as live in this filthy course, must needs counter-act and oppose their own reason and interest together. For they forsake God's way, which gives them as much liberty as can be reasonably desired; and cast themselves into a course of life, clogged with all manner of temporal and eternal miseries, of soul and body, honour and estate.

The plain rule and dictate of common reason, which I laid down before, being applied to this particular case, manifestly condemns it. For seeing honesty and chastity comprize the true pleasure, profit, and honour of the whole man; are more congruous to human nature, and preservative of it; it ought, therefore, to be preferred in the estimation and choice of all men, to unlawful adulterous pleasures, which (for the reasons above) are inferior in themselves to chaste, conjugal enjoyments; and besides that, are attended and followed with such a train of present and future miseries, destructive to the whole man.

And yet for all this, to the amazement of all serious observers, never was any age more infamous for this sin, than the present age is; and that under the clear shining light of the gospel.

What the special causes and inducements, to the overflowing and abounding of this sin, are in the present age, will be well worth the enquiring and sifting at this time.

§ 5. *Inducement* 1.

It is highly probable, the influencing examples of great men, have had no small hand in the spreading of this abominable and crying sin, amongst all inferior ranks and orders of men.

Great mens ill examples, like a bag of poison in the fountain, corrupt and infect multitudes. The vulgar think they are privileged, or, at the least, very much excused, when they do but follow the precedents and examples of great and eminent persons.

But this will be found a weak and foolish plea, for uncleanness, which will never be able to endure the test of your own reason: For the inbred notions of a God, and of a future life of retribution, being so firmly sealed and engraven upon human nature, they can never be utterly eradicated; your own

reason will argue from those inbred notions in this manner, and how you will be able to refel the argument, and escape conviction and self-condemnation, quite surmounts my imagination, whatever it do yours. And thus it will dispute, and *dilemma* you, do what you can.

That God, before whom greater and lesser, honourable and baser sinners shall appear in judgment, will be either partial or impartial, in his judgments upon them. There is, or there is not respect of persons with him. If there be, (which both his nature and word utterly deny;) then those great and honourable adulterers, or fornicators, whose examples you follow, may haply be excused for their eminency and honour's sake, but you, that have no such eminency and honour in the world, as they have, must be condemned, though you thought to escape as well as they.

But if there be no partiality, or respect of persons with God, (as most assuredly there is none), then both greater and lesser, honourable and baser, adulterers, must be condemned together, to the same common and intolerable misery.

So that to take any (though the least) encouragement to sin, from the precedents and examples of great ones, is a most senseless and irrational thing, utterly unworthy of one that believes there is a just and impartial God; and he is worse than a devil, that believes it not: For the devils themselves believe and tremble.

§ 6. *Inducement* 2.

But others would persuade us, they are drawn into this sin by a kind of inevitable necessity; they being neither able to contain, nor marry.

They are not yet arrived to an estate sufficient to maintain a family with reputation: But when they have gotten enough by trade, or by the fall of their paternal estates, to live in equal reputation with their neighbours; then they design to alter their course of life, and abandon these follies.

But, reader, if this be thy plea for uncleanness, thou shalt have as fair a trial, for a foul fact, as thine own heart can desire: be still thine own judge; and let thine own reason give a fair answer to these three pertinent questions.

Quest. 1. Whether whoredom be as likely and promising a way to engage God's blessing upon your trades and employments, as continence or conjugal chastity are? That is to say plainly, Whether obedience and disobedience to the law of God, be all one, and please him alike? You know, your success in business it is not in your own hand; it is God

that giveth thee power to get wealth: *His blessing maketh rich.* And is sin as likely a way to engage his blessing, as duty and obedience is? I am confident, your own reason will never give it.

Object. *If you say, such persons prosper in the world as well as others, for ought you see.*

Sol. The contrary is evident in the common observation of mankind: By reason of whoredom, multitudes are brought to a piece of bread. And though God suffer some unclean persons to prosper in the world; yet chastity with poverty, is infinitely preferable to such accursed prosperity.

Quest. 2. Whether the course of sin you are now driving and accustoming yourselves to, will not, in all probability, so infatuate and bewitch you, that when you come into a married estate, you shall still be under the power of this sin; and, so ruin the person you marry, as well as yourself? If the word of God signify any thing with you, it signifieth this; That there is a witchcraft in whoredom; and, comparatively speaking, "None that go to her return again, neither take they "hold of the paths of life;" Prov. ii. 18, 19.

Object. *If to invalidate this testimony, you shall say that he that spake this, did himself go after strange women.*

Sol. It is true, he did so. But then withal, you must remember, that he hath warned you by his own sad experience, that you never follow him in those his footsteps: Eccles. vii. 26. "I find (saith he) more bitter than death, the woman whose "heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands. Whoso "pleaseth God, shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be "taken by her."

Quest. 3. And, *lastly*, I demand of your reason, whether it can, or will, allow any place to this plea of necessity; before you have tried and used all God's appointed remedies, which are sufficient to prevent that necessity you plead?

There are lawful remedies enough, sufficient, with God's blessing, to keep you from such a necessity to sin; such as temperance, and more abstemiousness in meats and drinks; avoiding lascivious books, play-houses, and filthy company; laborious diligence in your lawful callings, and fervent prayer, for mortifying and preventing grace: And if temptations shall stir amidst all these preventives; then casting yourselves upon the directions and supply of providence, in the honourable estate of marriage. Never plead necessity, whilst all these preventives might, but have not been used.

§ 7. *Inducement* 3.

Others plead the absence of their lawful remedies, and presence of tempting objects. This is the case of our soldiers and seamen. But though this be the most colourable pretence of all the rest, yet your own reason and conscience will, even in this case, so *dilemma* and *non-plus* you, that if you will adventure upon the sin, you shall never have their leave and consent with you: For they have a special and peculiar consideration of you, as persons more eminently and immediately exposed to the dangers of death than other men. And thus (would you but give them a fair hearing) they will expostulate and reason out the matter with you.

'Either thou shalt escape, or not escape, the hazard of this 'voyage, or battle. If thou fall (as to be sure many will) will 'this be an honourable, safe, and comfortable close, and wind-'ing up of thy life? What, from a whore to thy grave! God 'forbid. From burning lusts, to everlasting burnings! Better 'thou hadst never been born.'

Or if thou do escape, and return again to thy family; how canst thou look her in the face, with whom thou hast so basely broken thy marriage-vow and covenant? Whatever else thou bring home with thee, to be sure thou shalt bring home guilt with thee, a blot never to be wiped away.

Object. *If you say, you are not such fools to publish your own shame: you will follow Caesar's advice to the young adulterer,* Si non caste, tamen caute, *If I act not chastly, I will act cautiously.*

Sol. Your reason and conscience will both deride the weakness and folly of this pretence: For they both very well know, no man sins so secretly, but he sins before two infallible witnesses, *viz.* God, and his own conscience; and that the last, and least of these, is more than a thousand witnesses. That God usually detects it in this world, carry it as closely as you will; but to be sure, it shall be published as upon the house-top, before men and angels in the great day.

§ 8. *Inducement* 4.

Another inducement to this sin, (and the last I shall mention), is the commonness of it, which abates the shame of it.

What need they trouble themselves so much, or be so shy of that which is practised by thousands, which is so frequently acted in every place, and little made of it?

But if either your reason or conscience will admit this plea for good and lawful, the devil hath utterly blinded or infatuated the one or other; as will evidently appear by the following reasons. For,

Reason 1. If the thing be evil, (as you cannot deny but it is) then, by how much the commoner, by so much the worse it must needs be. Indeed, if a thing be good, by how much the commoner, so much the better: but to attribute this essential property of good unto evil, is to confound and destroy the difference between them, and make good and evil both alike.

Reason 2. If the commonness of uncleanness will excuse you, it will more excuse all others that shall commit this sin after you: and still by how much more the numbers of adulterers and fornicators are increased, still the less scruple men need make to commit it; and so the whole community shall in a little time be so infected and defiled, that christian kingdoms shall quickly become like Sodom, and God provoked to deal with them, as he did by that wretched city.

Reason 3. If the commonness of the sin be an excuse and plea for it; suppose the roads should be more infested than they are with highwaymen, so that every month you should see whole cart-loads of them drawn to Tyburn; would your reason infer from thence, that because hanging is grown so common, you need not scruple so much as you were wont to do, to take a purse, or pistol an honest innocent traveller upon the road?

Object. *If you shall say, uncleanness is not so costly a sin as robbery is: there is a great deal of difference between Tyburn, and a whore-house punishment.*

Sol. There is a great difference indeed, even as much as is betwixt Tyburn and hell, or a small mulct in the courts of men, and the eternal wrath of a sin-revenging God: so great will the difference betwixt the punishments of all sins by God, and by men, be found.

Thus you see, gentlemen, the common pleas for uncleanness over-ruled by your own reason and consciences.

We live in a plentiful land, abounding with all the comforts of this life, and with thousands of full-fed wantons; of whom the Lord complains this day, as he did of the Jews, whom that flowing land vomited out, Jer. v. 7. "When I had fed them "to the full, they committed adultery, and assembled them-"selves by troops in the harlots houses. They were as fed "horses in the morning; every one neighed after his neigh-"bour's wife." How many such stallions are thus neighing in the fat pastures of this good land!

Nor do I wonder at all to see the growth of Atheism, in a land swarmed and over-run with so many thousands of blasphemers, drunkards, and adulterers. It was a grave observati-

on of that gallant moralist, Plutarch: 'If Epicurus (saith he) 'should but grant a God in his full perfections, he must change 'his life presently, he must be a swine no longer.'

The Lord purge out this crying abomination also, with Atheism and drunkenness, the inlets of it, which darken our glory, and threaten to make us desolate.

CHAP. VI.

Wherein reason and conscience are once more consulted, about that bitter and implacable enmity found in thousands this day against all serious piety, and the strict professors thereof, who differ from them in some external modes, and rites of worship; and their determinations, upon that case, impartially reported.

§ 1. MAN is naturally a sociable creature, delighting in company and converse. He that affects to live by, and to himself, must be (saith the philosopher) ἢ θηρίον, ἢ θεός; either a God that is self-sufficient, and stands in need of none; or a wild beast, so savage and fierce, that it can endure nothing but itself.

This natural quality of sociableness is diversly improved. Sometimes sinfully, in wicked combinations to do mischief; like the herding together of wolves and tygers: such was the confederation of Simeon and Levi, brethren in iniquity; Gen. xlix. 56. Sometimes it is improved civilly, for the more orderly and prosperous management of human affairs. Thus all civilized countries have improved it, for the common security and benefit. And sometimes religiously, for the better promoting of each other's spiritual and eternal good.

Now the more firmly any civil or religious societies are knit together by love, and coalesce in unity, by so much the better they are secured against their common enemies and dangers, and become still the more prosperous and flourishing within and among themselves. For when every man finds his particular interest involved in the public safety and security, (as every private cabbin and passenger is in the safety of the ship), every particular person will then stand ready to contribute his uttermost assistance, for the public interest, both in peace and war. United force, we all know, is more than single; and,

in this sense, we say, *Unus homo, nullus homo*; one man, is no man, that is, considered disjunctively, and alone; when yet that single person, standing in a proper place of service in the body, may, by his prudence and courage, signify very much to the public weal of his country; as Fabius did to the Roman state, of whom the poet truly observed,

Unis homo nobis cunctando restituit rem;

That one man, by his prudent delay and conduct, hath saved the whole commonwealth.

§ 2. It is therefore the undoubted interest of Christian states and churches, to make every individual person as useful as may be to the whole, and to enjoy the services of all their subjects and members, one way or other, according to their different capacities; that it may be said of them, (as the historian speaks of the land of Canaan) that there was in it, *Nihil infructuosum, nihil sterile*; not a shrub but bare some fruit.

No prudent kingdom, or church, will deprive themselves of the benefits they may enjoy by the services of any considerable number of men, (especially if they be able and good men) without a plain, inevitable necessity. No man, without such a necessity, will part with the use and service of the least finger or toe, much less with a leg or arm: but would reckon himself half undone, if a paralytic disease should strike one half of the body, and render it utterly useless to defend and succour the other part in time of danger.

§ 3. Much so stands the case with churches and kingdoms, when the causeless and cruel enmity of one part prevails so far against the other, as to deprive that state, or church, of the use and service of multitudes of good and faithful members.

It is folly, in its highest exaltation, for one part of a nation, out of bitter enmity to the other, not only to seek all ways and means to suppress and ruin it, whilst a common danger hangs over the whole; but to rejoice in the miseries of their brethren, as the principal thing which they fancy would contribute to the great advantage of their cause. What but a general punishment, (if that will do it) can work mens hearts into a more general compassion?

The histories of those times sufficiently inform us, that the great feuds and factions in the western church, not only immediately preceded, but opened the way to the terrible inundations of the Goths and Vandals. Whilst the suffering part cries out, cruelty, cruelty; those that inflict it, cry as loud, justice, justice. Whatever rational apologies, or methods of peace, come from the oppressed party, are censured by the o-

ther as murmur and mutiny. All men commend unity, and assert it to be the interest of kingdoms and churches. They wish all men were of one mind; but what mind must that be? To be sure, none but their own.

The more cool, prudent, and moderate spirits of each party, may strive to the uttermost, to allay these unnatural feuds and animosities. The wisdom of the governing part, may take the instruments of cruelty out of their hand; but it is God alone, that can pluck up the roots of enmity out of their hearts.

And what is the matter, when all is sifted and examined? Why the matter is this: some will be more serious, strict, and conscientious, than others think fit or necessary for them to be. They dare not curse, swear, whore, and be drunk, as others do. They scruple to comply with what God hath not commanded, and the very imposers confess to be indifferent, antecedently to their command. They reverently mention the name of God, without an oath, and the solemn matters of religion, without a jest in their company. They will assume as much liberty to reprove sin, as others do to commit it. They take more pleasure in heavenly duties, and holy conferences, than in ranting and roaring in taverns and ale-houses. That is, in a word, they live up to the principles of religion, which all pretend to; and this is their unpardonable crime, a fault never to be expiated by any less punishment than their destruction.

And are not people (think you) come to a fine pass; when the strictest obedience to the laws of God, shall be accounted more criminal, than the most open and profane violation of them? Nay, though they reprove the other party's sin no other way, but by their most serious and religious lives; yet this alone shall be sufficient to make them culpable and obnoxious.

§ 4. If the party thus generally hated and maligned, be (for the generality of them) serious and godly Christians; or if the strictness and holiness of their lives, and tenderness of their consciences, be the true ground and reason of our hatred of them; such an hatred, when it becomes general, is a direful presage of some common calamity and misery hastening upon such a people: Hos. ix. 7. "The days of visitation are come; "the days of recompence are come; Israel shall know it. The "prophet is a fool; the spiritual man is mad; for the mul- "titude of thine iniquity, and the great hatred."

And our own reason will give us this conclusion, as well as

scripture: for whatsoever brings sin to its full maturity, must needs hasten judgments. And what can heighten and accent the sins of a people, more than such a cruel hatred of good men, upon the score and account before given? All hatred of godliness hath a tang of devilishness. It is a desperate flying in the very face of God, whose image holiness is. Sin can scarce be graduated a peg higher.

Reason tells the husbandman, it is time to mow and reap his corn, when it is full ripe. And it may convince you, that God's time of reaping down a sinful people is near, when their sins are grown to such full maturity as this: "Put ye in the "sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get ye down, for the "press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great," Joel iii. 13.

§ 5. The true cause and rise of this great and fixed hatred amongst professed Christians, (whatever may be pretended to salve reputation) is the contrariety and repugnancy of the natures, and principles, by which the godly and ungodly are governed. There is an enmity betwixt the two seeds, Gen. iii. 25. And this enmity runs down in a blood, more or less, in all ages, and places; Gal. iv. 29. "As then, he that was "born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the "Spirit; even so it is now." So it was, and so it is, and so it will be, till conversion changeth the heart and principle. This enmity cannot die, whilst Satan lives, and rules in the hearts of children of disobedience.

And the enmity is mutual: "An unjust man is an abomina-"tion to the just; and he that is upright in the way, is an a-"bomination to the wicked," Prov. xxix. 27. Only with this difference; the good man hates, *non virum, sed vitium*; not the person, but his sin. The wicked man hates both the person of the godly, and his godliness too; yea, the person for his godliness sake.

This hatred of the godly, secretly and habitually lurks in the nature of a wicked man; as rapaciousness doth in a young wolf, that never saw a lamb. It extends itself universally to the whole kind, and reaches those, whose lives are most obligingly sweet: yea, those that are bound to them in the strictest bonds of nature: as we may see, in that most unnatural instance of Cain's murdering his own brother Abel. It discovers itself, in seeking the destruction of them they hate upon a religious account, and in rejoicing at any evil that befals them. Nothing is more grateful to them, than any occasion to disgrace, and expose them with contempt to the world.

§ 6. But though the strictness and holiness of good men, causing the consciences of wicked men privately to condemn, and inwardly to gall and grate them for their looseness, and profaneness, be the true and real ground and cause of the grudge and hatred; yet they think it fit, for reputation-sake, that this be wholly suppressed and silenced, and something else pretended for the cause and reason of it, else it would look too like the devil himself. And therefore, amongst other plausible pretensions, for their malignity to those that are better than themselves, these three are principally insisted on, and pleaded

1. That it is not their piety, but their hypocrisy, which they hate: not because they have indeed more piety than others, but because they make more vain shew and ostentation of it than themselves do; who, setting aside their ridiculous grimaces, and affected fantastic words and actions, are every whit as good as themselves.

2. Because, under a pretence of greater strictness in religion, they do but hatch and carry on sedition and rebellion; and that the world will never be quiet, whilst such vipers are suffered in the bowels of it.

3. That both the former have been made sufficiently evident and apparent, in several former, and more recent instances, of the hypocrisy and seditious designs of as high pretenders to religion and reformation, as those are, whom they truly hate, and would not suffer them to live, if their power were answerable to their hatred.

As to this first plea, *viz.* their hypocrisy; it will quickly be found to be too thin and weak to endure the test of your own reason and consciences. For how will you answer them, when they shall thus argue and expostulate the matter with you?

'You that thus censure, and those that are censured for 'hypocrisy by you, do both profess one and the same religion. 'Your profane lives are notoriously contrary to all the prin-'ciples of this religion. You swear, drink, whore, revile, and 'persecute the others, only because you fancy their tones, 'gestures, *&c.* to be some way or other indecent. You can-'not deny, but they live soberly and godly: they attend upon 'all the duties of religion strictly and conscientiously. Your 'malice against them can find nothing to carp at, but some 'little trifles, with which the essence of religion is not con-'cerned. Did they run into the same excess of riot with you, 'greater matters than these would be overlooked, yea, and 'applauded too.'

Now let reason and conscience say, Who is most likely to be the hypocrite; the man that calls himself a Christian, and under that profession wallows in all profaneness, not once censuring himself for it; or he that lives soberly and godly, against whom malice itself can produce nothing but such inconsiderable trifles as these? Is not this the very case, which Christ hath determined to our hands, and made such censurers, the hypocrites? Matth. vii. 3. "And why beholdest thou the mote "that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that "is in thine own eye?" Is was but one blemish, and that a very small one too, but a mote; however this you can quickly spy, and as rashly censure. But mean while there is a beam, an horrid flagitious wickedness in yourselves; but it is too near your own eyes, to be discerned by you. Which of these two (think you) is the hypocrite?

2. But what if this mote that you discern, be but a fancy, a mere imagination of your own; how will that aggravate your sin, and evince both your malice and hypocrisy together? You say, their tones and gestures in religious duties, are ridiculous, and scenical. This you take up lightly against some few of them, and as unjustly apply unto the aspersing of the whole party; which your own reason must, and will immediately condemn. For there are multitudes of that party, whose countenances, tones and gestures, are as decorous, grave, and becoming the presence of that God with whom they have to do, as any men in the world.

4. And as for those few whom you thus blemish for their indecent tones and gestures; what if those tones you speak of, amount to no more but natural defects, and unavoidable infirmities, which they would, but cannot help? Do they for this, and no worse than this, deserve to be censured, and condemned for hypocrites? Or, what if they be insensible actions, occasioned by the greater intention of their spirits in the service of God? May not these very things, which you profanely flout, censure, and scoff at, either not at all be noted as blemishes to their devotion by the eye of God, or noted with approbation and delight, as the effects of spiritual fervency in his service? Certainly, gentlemen, you are no good marksmen, that neither draw the right arrow, nor level at the true mark.

4. And were not this a vain and empty pretence, to cover your own malice against godliness; how comes it to pass, that more scenical habits, words, and gestures, should pass as ornaments in others, whom you affect? Whether this be not

partiality unworthy of a man, let reason and conscience freely judge.

In a word; What commission or authority can you produce, thus to ascend the throne of God, and draw your bitterest censures through the very hearts of God's people, for such pitiful trifles as these; first condemning them as hypocrites, which is a most unwarrantable presumption; and then persecute them as far as you can, for their presumed hypocrisy? Have a care what you do; be not mockers, lest your bands be made strong. This is a sin which hastens national desolation; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, 17. "They mocked the messengers of God, and "despised his word, and misused his prophets; until the wrath "of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. "Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, "who slew their young men with the sword," *&c.*

Plea 2. *You say*, It is not godliness you hate, and would persecute; but they are a sort of persons, who under a pretence of zeal for religion and reformation, design nothing else but sedition and rebellion, that the nation will never be quiet, whilst such vipers are suffered to live in it: And to fortify this plea, you add, that both their hypocrisy and sedition have been made sufficiently evident to the world in many instances.

Zeal for the laws, and security of the government, if rightly tempered and qualified, is higly commendable; and wherever sincerity animates, and prudence governs it, it ought by no means to be discouraged. But there are too many grounds and causes of suspicion, that both these will be found wholly wanting, or extremely defective, in many high pretenders to it, when it comes to be sifted to its bottom principles, and weighed in the just balance of sound reason.

For if you be inflamed with a pure zeal for the laws and government you live under; then you will find yourselves obliged, for your own vindication, to satisfy the just expectation of your own, and other mens reasons and consciences, in the following particulars:

Expectation 1. *First*, Reason and conscience, in yourselves and others, will expect it from you, that you, of all men living, should be most precisely and punctually obedient to all those just and good laws you live under; since your zeal burns so hot against those that comply not punctually with them. For those that make so much conscience (as you seem to do, of other mens offences against the laws, must be presumed (if your profession be sincere) to make at least as much conscience of breaking any of them in your own persons; else neither

reason nor conscience will ever admit this plea of yours for sound and good.

Now the laws sometimes appoint punishments for nonconformity to the rites and ceremonies, affixed to the public national worship; and so they do always for convicted swearing, drunkenness, and adultery. All these laws have the very same sanction, by the authority we live under. They forbid, and punish, the one as well as the other. And if there be any difference, it lies in this, that these latter are expressly forbidden and threatned by God, antecedently to the magistrate's prohibition of them, which hath no small weight in the matter under consideration.

Now, if any man shall pretend zeal and conscience, against dissent in judgment or practice, from the church, but makes no conscience at all to curse and swear, be drunk or unclean; he will find it a difficult task to persuade his own, or other mens reasons or consciences, that this his zeal, for the laws and government, is sincere and pure. For were it so, it could never allow him to live in the notorious violation of the laws himself, which he is so fierce and bitter against others for.

Expectation 2. *Secondly*, If your zeal be sincere, it will contain itself within the bounds and limits of the offence, and not lay hold upon the innocent, as well as upon the guilty; and make you hate and persecute them that were never turbulent and seditious, equally with the greatest criminals. If you will hug this principle as things stand now, reason will tell you, it is as just at all other times, as it is at this.

Would you not think it an unreasonable and most injurious thing, to be plucked out of your shops, or houses, and hurried away to the goal; because two or three dissolute fellows in the city or town where you live, have been riotous or seditious, though you possibly know not the men, nor can be so much as justly suspected of any confederacy with them? True zeal for the laws and government, is content to wait, and suspend its revenge, till a fair conviction have passed upon the guilty. And when it falls upon them, it is careful that it touch none besides them: but suffers a man to retain, in the very height of it, due love and honour for all that are innocent.

If Christians be first denominated by general titles and terms of distinction, which they cannot help, and then the crimes of any particular person, that the world pleases to denominate as one of the same party, must be charged and imputed to the whole; what must the consequence of this be, but that the

whole community become obnoxious to punishment, and the very government itself thereupon be dissolved?

For I take it to be past denial or doubt, that some of each denomination have been, are, or may be guilty of seditious practices. Some hypocrites will lurk among those vast bodies of people, under the most strict and watchful government; but God forbid their guilt should affect the whole body, under whose names they shelter themselves. God, reason, and conscience, do all command the hottest zeal, to make its pause and just distinction here. Let the guilty be brought to condign punishment, upon fair trial and conviction. This discourse designs no favour for such. But let not those who abhor their wickedness, and are as pure from their crimes as yourselves, suffer with them, or for them: For then your reason will tell you, yourselves are as liable to sufferings as they; and that your zeal is not kindled by love to justice, but the hatred of a party.

It is not in the body politic, as in the body natural: If the hand steal, the feet are justly laid in irons, and the neck put into an halter; because all the members of the body natural are animated, and governed but by one soul. But in the body politic, every individual hath a distinct soul of his own; and therefore that member only that offends ought to be punished, and all the rest to enjoy their full liberty and honour as before. Away therefore forever with this church and state destroying synechdoche.

Expectation 3. *Thirdly*, If there be a change made upon the laws, and they shall at any time tolerate and protect that party and practice which once they made criminal; then your reason, and every man's else, will expect from you (if your zeal for the laws and government be sincere and unfeigned) that your countenance and carriage to that people be changed and altered, according to the different aspect of the laws and government upon them: That your envy and hatred cease with the offence; and that you be as ready to assist and encourage them, when they act according to law, as you formerly were to inflict and prosecute them for acting contrary to law: Else, pretend what you will, it is plain enough, that it was not zeal for the laws and government, but somewhat else, (which every body may guess at) that inflamed your rage against them.

For whensoever the wisdom of the government finds it necessary, by toleration, to take away the crime and offence, it

must necessarily take away this very plea for hatred and persecution with it: Otherwise it would be all one, to act for law, and against law; to punish them that are offenders, and them that offend no more than yourselves; to turn the edge of your rage and fury, against those that undermine the government, and those that are as zealous as yourselves, to support and defend it, by their persons and purses.

Expectation 4. *Fourthly*; Your reason will justly expect it from you, that when, or wheresoever you shall see eminent piety meeting with punctual conformity in one man, that man shall be your very darling; and that both these qualifications should recommend him to your dearest affection, the more strictly godly he is, the more conformable he is to the laws of God; as well as by his punctal compliance with enjoined rules and rites of worship, to the laws of men. If he be a man of catholic charity to all of every persuasion, whom he judges to fear God, and be truly conscientious; if he boldly and impartially reproves sin, wherever he finds it, though it be in his own patron, or men of his own profession; you will still love him the more for that. For if sincerity and conformity (as you pretend) be the very things which you make such a noise and bustle for in the world, here you have them both in conjunction. This is the man you seem to seek (by these pleas of yours) for a pattern and standard to reduce other men to.

And is it really so, gentlemen, with you? Do you heartily affect and prize a strict and serious conformist, that fears not to expose the odious shamefulness and wickedness of profane swearing, cursing, drunkenness and uncleanness, without respect of persons, both in his pulpit and private converses? Do you love him the better, for his plain dealing with your consciences, in detecting the grand cheat of formality in religion; for his close cutting convictions of the insufficiency of mere civility to your salvation, and the indispensible necessity of regeneration? Do you heartily love and honour him, for thundering you out of ale-houses and taverns, unto your family and closet-duties? 'For telling you plainly, your 'love must not be confined to your own party, but extended 'to all that fear God, however they be externally distinguish-'ed among men? Nay, for convincing you plainly, that religi-'on lies not in external modes and rites, in standing, kneeling, 'or responses? That the name and cry of the church, the 'church, will as little avail to your salvation, as the cry of the 'superstitious and profane Jews, The temple of the Lord,

'the temple of the Lord are these? That true religion is an 'inward, serious, spiritual thing, consisting in an evidencing 'itself by the mortification of your sins, and real devotedness 'of your hearts to the Lord?'

If such a man as this will please, and delight your very hearts; then my reason is bound to conclude, there may be reality in what you pretend. But if you shall hate and loath such a man as this equally with a professed dissenter; you must excuse me, and all the rational world with me, if we shall conclude, that it is not true zeal for the laws, for the church, or for the sincerity and peaceable lives of its professors; but an inward rooted enmity at religion itself, that sets you on work, under the feigned pretences of other things.

Expectation 5. *Fifthly*, Your reason will expect, and exact it from you, that whensoever you shall be convinced, that all these stirs and bustles that have been in the world, all this fining, imprisoning, and impoverishing your Protestant brethren and neighbours for their conscience sake, hath done the church no good, but given a great and real advantage to our common enemy, to ruin us together; that we may distinguish ourselves how we please in our folly, but they will never distinguish us in their fury; for we are all known to them, by one common name of Heretics.

In this case, your reason exacts it from you, and so doth the common reason of mankind, that a sense of common interest, and common danger, now quiet those feuds, and extinguish those fires, which our own lusts first kindled, and the devil and our common enemies have incensed, to the great damage and hazard of the whole Protestant cause.

Such a seasonable and becoming sense as this, were in itself sufficient to cool a wise man's heats, if penal laws were left standing in their full force and vigour: But when the wisdom and reason of the state shall plainly discern both the usefulness and necessity of liberty, and thereupon take away (as they have now most prudently and seasonably done) the further occasions of mischiefs to the whole, by relaxing the yoke that bound some (and those a very great body of truly loyal and useful subjects) leaving the rest in the quiet possession of their own liberties and properties; what shall we call that fire, which still continues burning and increasing, not only after, but by all this, but an unquenchable hell-fire.

If chimera's, and self-created jealousies, are indulged, that some carnal interests of ours are not so well secured to us un-

der liberty, as they were under persecution and tyranny; this will be the right way to perpetuate dissentions and persecutions to the end of the world.

And now, gentlemen, I hope I may say, without being vain or opinionative, our reason hath fairly disarmed you of these pleas and excuses, by which you have hitherto defended yourselves in your most sinful practices of profane cursing and swearing, drunkenness, uncleanness, and bitter enmity against your Protestant brethren, for things that touch not the essence of Christianity.

And believe it, sirs, it is truly genteel and glorious, to suffer yourselves to be subdued and conquered by the plain convictions of your own reason and conscience. It is ten thousand times more honourable and glorious to lay down your arms at the feet of these, than to lay down both reason and conscience at the feet of Satan and your lusts, and continue fighting obstinately against God, your own souls, bodies, estates, reputations; yea, your very reasons and consciences, your innocent brethren, and the peace of church and state, under Satan's banner.

In all this discourse, I have not designed to exasperate, but assuage and restrain your lusts and passions, by laying the loving and gentle hands of your own reasons and consciences upon them. I have not given the least injurious touch to your honour, but all along pleaded for the recovery, or security of it. I have exposed no man by any particular mark, or indignation.

But now I have done with you; if your own consciences shall begin to make a rounder and more particular application of these general reasonings and arguments, and say to you, as Nathan to David, thou art the man; I am not accountable to God for that. But be confident of it, you are accountable to God for all those plain convictions, and faithful endeavours used with you, and tried upon you, to save you from all those miseries your head-strong lusts, with furious precipitation, are manifestly running you into.

If you can substantially and solidly refel those arguments against, and vindicate those pleas for sin, which reason and conscience have urged and censured above; and can produce stronger and clearer arguments, to defend and justify the courses here censured and condemned; or if you can obtain a writ of error, to remove these causes to another lawful court of judicature, where you shall obtain a more favourable verdict, your complaint of severe dealing with you here, will not want some

ground or colour; but if you cannot, (as you know you cannot) then never blame your own reasons nor mine, for dealing rigorously or injuriously with you.

I am willing to hope, and persuade myself, that I shall at least obtain a reformation of life from many of you. I have strove hard for it with you here: I will strive harder with God in prayer, to obtain it for you. But yet, gentlemen, I must tell you in the close, that though an external reformation of these evil courses may make your lives more healthy, happy, and durable in this world, and will greatly conduce to the public as well as your personal and private interest; yet if you expect complete and perfect happiness in the world to come, you must advance one step further beyond reformation, unto sound conversion. The first makes you comparatively happy here; but the second will make you perfectly happy and blessed for ever hereafter. The first frees you from many temporal miseries upon earth; but the second, from eternal miseries in hell. And this brings you to the other blessed step, by conversion; which is the second part.

THE SECOND PART:

EVINCING THE POSSIBILITY, NECESSITY, and EXCELLENCY OF CONVERSION to GOD;

The only Thing that makes Men truly happy, and perfectly blessed, in the World to come.

§ I. *Conviction supposed, and grace admired.*

REASON and conscience having been shaming men out of their profaneness, in the former part of this discourse, free grace invites them to the life of *holiness*, and thereby to the life of blessedness, in this second part.

There you see what it is to live like beasts; here you may see what it is to live like Christians.

My charity commands me to ſuppoſe, that ſome readers ſtand, by this time, convicted in their own conſciences, both of the extreme wickedneſs, and the immediate danger of that profane courſe they have hitherto purſued, and perſiſted in; and that by this time they begin to interrogate them in the apoſtle's cloſe and cutting language, Rom. vi. 21. "What fruit "had ye then in thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed? "For the end of theſe things is death." It is hard to imagine, that ſo many cloſe debates and reaſonings, as you have heard in the former part, ſhould not leave many of you under conviction and trouble of ſpirit. You ſee, your own reaſons and conſciences have condemned you: "And if our heart con-"demn us, (ſaith the apoſtle) God is greater than our heart, "and knoweth all things;" 1 John iii. 20. It is folly to imagine, you ſhall be acquitted at God's immediate bar, who are already caſt and condemned at your own privy ſeſſions.

If this be the happy effect, as I hope it is, of all the former cloſe and ſolemn debates with your conſciences, it will naturally and immediately caſt thy ſoul, reader, into great admiration of, and aſtoniſhment at, the patience and long-ſuffering of God, that hath borne with thee, under a life of prodigious and reiterated provocations until this day. And his goodneſs will be as admirable to thee, as his patience; in that he hath not only ſuffered thee to live till this day, but made it the day of thy conviction, the firſt neceſſary ſtep towards thy converſion; and the very firſt things he entertains thy convinced and troubled ſoul with, to be the poſſibility and probability of thy converſion to God.

The greatneſs of his patience ſhews his almighty power, Rom. ix. 22. Nahum i. 3. but his willingneſs to paſs by all the wrongs you have done him, and to be at peace with you, diſcovers the immenſe riches of his grace, Tit. iii. 3, 4.

That God ſhould be ſo quick in the executions of his wrath upon your companions in ſin, and ſo patient and long-ſuffering towards you, that have out-ſinned them all; is ſuch a comparative conſideration of his bounty, as ſhould even overwhelm the man that beholds it. Rom. xi. 22. "Behold the "goodneſs and ſeverity of God! on them that fell, ſeverity; "but towards thee, goodneſs."

If thou be that very man, who in the paſt courſe of thy life haſt been a profane ſwearer, a beaſtly drunkard, a laſcivious perſon, an hater and perſecutor of good men; and after all this, the Lord hath brought an offer of mercy to thy ſoul, and ſhall convince thee it is not come too late, but that the door of

hope stands yet open to thee; my advice to thee is, that thou cast thyself down at the feet of mercy, and after this manner pour forth thy laments and desires before the Lord.

'And is there yet a possibility of mercy, O Lord God, for 'such a vile wretch as I have been! can the arms of free grace 'yet open themselves to embrace such a monster of wickedness 'as I am? *Who then is a God like unto thee?* And what pati-'ence, mercy, and goodness, is like thine? I have far exceed-'ed others in sin; I have lived the life of a beast, yea, of a de-'vil. I have dared thy dreadful, and glorious name, with 'thousands of horrid blasphemies; trampled all thy glorious 'attributes under my feet, challenged thee, to thy very face, 'to do thy worst, even to damn me to the pit of hell: I have 'yielded up this soul, with all its noble faculties and powers, 'as instruments of sin unto the devil; and made this body, 'which should have been the hallowed temple of thy Spirit, 'to be the noisome sink (or common-sewer) for all unclean 'and abominable lusts, to run and settle in. I have hated, 'reviled, and persecuted those that lived more strictly, soberly, 'and godly, than myself; because their convincing examples 'disquieted, checked, and convicted my conscience, in the 'eager pursuit of my lusts and pleasures.

'I have lived in the profane neglect of prayer, meditation, 'self-reflection, and all other spiritual Christian duties; think-'ing to make an atonement for all, by a few hypocritical, ex-'ternal formalities.

'To accomodate my carnal interest in the world, I have 'come reeking hot out of an ale-house, or whore-house, to 'the table of the Lord; where, with unhallowed hands, and 'a more unhallowed heart, I have crucified again the Lord 'of glory, and given the vilest affront and despite to that most 'sacred and precious blood, which now must save me, or I 'am lost for ever. Thus have I done; and "because thou '"keepest silent, I thought thee to be altogether such an one '"as myself: but this day hast thou reproved me, and set mine '"abominations in order before me."

'I have tempted and seduced many others into the same 'impieties with me, of whom, some are already gone down 'to the dead, and others so fixed, and fully engaged in the pur-'suit of their lusts, that there appear no signs of repentance, 'or recovery in them.

'Thy wrath, Lord, soon brake forth against the angels that 'sinned in heaven; yet hitherto hast thou forborn and spared 'me, who have been highly provoking thee ever since I was

'born, by a life of unparalleled wickedness upon earth. Vile 'wretch that I am! I have despised the *riches of thy goodness,* '*forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the good-* '*ness of God leadeth me to repentance.* And after all, here 'I am told, that there is yet a possibility of pardon, mercy and 'salvation for me. The news is so great and so good, that 'that I am zealously concerned to examine the grounds and 'evidences of it. And if it shall appear to be as true, as it 'is astonishingly strange, and ravishingly sweet; I hope, it 'shall effectually lead me to repentance, and dissolve for ever 'the strongest ties betwixt me and my lusts.'

§ II. *Conversion of the vilest sinner possible.*

THAT it is possible for the greatest and most infamous sinner to be recovered by repentance and conversion, and thereupon to find mercy and forgiveness with God; is a truth as sure and firm as it is sweet and comfortable. Three things will give full evidence of it.

1. That their sins do not exceed the power and sufficiency of the causes of remission.

2. That such sinners are within the calls and invitations of the gospel.

3. That such sinners are found among the instances and examples of pardoning mercy, recorded in the scriptures.

And if the causes of pardon be sufficient, and able to produce it; if the gospel-invitations do take them in, and such sinners as these, every way as vile and wicked, have not been shut out, but received to mercy; then it is beyond all doubt that there is (at least) a possibility of mercy for such sinners as you are.

I. It is past rational doubt, that the causes of remission are every way sufficient, and able to produce the forgiveness of such sins as yours are. For consider with yourselves,

The power of { 1. The impulsive cause. 2. The meritorious cause. 3. The applying cause.

1. The sufficiency and ability of the impulsive cause of pardon, which is none other but the free grace of God, the immense riches and treasures whereof, do infinitely exceed the accompts and computations both of angels and men. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. "And the Lord passed by before him, and pro- "claimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and graci- "ous, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth: "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and trans-

"greſſion, and ſin." Mic. vii. 18, 19. "Who is a God like "unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſ- "greſſions of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not "his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy. He "will turn again, he will have compaſſion upon us; he will "ſubdue our iniquities, and thou wilt caſt all our ſins into the "depths of the ſea." Once more, Rom. v. 20. "Where ſin "abounded, grace did much more abound." So that whatever thy ſins have been, they do not, they cannot exceed the ability and power of the grace of God, the all-ſufficient, impulſive cauſe of remiſſion. That infinite abyſs, or ſea of mercy, can ſwallow up, and cover ſuch mountains of guilt, as thine have been.

2. Nor do thy ſins exceed the ability and power of the meritorious cauſe of remiſſion, namely, *the blood of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; for that blood is the blood of God, Acts xx. 28. He is the Lamb of God, whoſe blood is ſufficient to take away the ſins of the world, John i. 29. There is but one ſin in the world exempt from remiſſion by this blood, and if thy heart be now wounded with the ſenſe of ſin, (as I here ſuppoſe it to be) that is none of thy ſin, how heinous ſoever thy other ſins be.

3. Nor do thy ſins exceed the ability and power of the applying cauſe of pardon, namely, the Spirit of God. For though I ſhould ſuppoſe thy mind to be clouded, and overſhadowed with groſſeſt ignorance, thy heart to be as hard as an adament, or nether-millſtone, thy will ſtiff and obſtinate, thy affections enchanted and bewitched with the pleaſures of ſin; yet this Spirit of God, in a moment, can make a convincing beam of light to dart into thy dark mind, make thy hard heart relent, thy ſtubborn will to bow, and all the affections of thy ſoul to comply, and open obediently to Chriſt. John xvi. 9, 10, "The Spirit when he cometh, he ſhall convince the world of "ſin," *&c.*

Thus you ſee, whatever your guilt be, it does not exceed the abilities of the cauſes of remiſſion. O what an encouragement is this?

II. And there is yet further encouragement in this, that if you will open your Bibles, you may find yourſelves within the calls and invitations of the goſpel. And no man can ſay, that man is without hope, that is within a goſpel-invitation. Conſider Iſa. lv. 7, 8. "Let the wicked forſake his way, and the "unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the

" Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God; " for he will abundantly pardon; for my thoughts are not " your thoughts," *&c.* Here you have the nature of converſion deſcribed negatively and poſitively, by forſaking your ways and thoughts, and turning to the Lord. The way notes the external courſe of the converſation; the thoughts denote the internal frame and temper of the mind: both theſe muſt be forſaken. And turning to the Lord, denotes the ſincere dedicating of the whole man to God; all which is poſſible, and eaſy for the Spirit of God to do; and this being once done, abundant pardon is aſſured. If you ſay, you cannot think it; God tells you, in the very next words, that his thoughts are not your thoughts; but as far above them, as the heavens are higher than the earth. Read to the ſame purpoſe, Iſa. i. 18. Rev. iii. 20. John vii. 27.

III. And to make the poſſibility of remiſſion yet clearer, know, for your encouragement, that as vile, infamous, and prodigious ſinners as yourſelves, are recorded, and found amongſt the inſtances and examples of forgiven ſinners in ſcripture. Paul was once a fierce and cruel perſecutor and blaſphemer, yet he obtained mercy, 1 Tim. i. 13, 14. That ſinful woman, recorded, Luke vii. 37, 38. was an infamous, and a notorious ſinner; yet her ſins which were many, were forgiven her, ver. 47. Manaſſeh was a monſter of wickedneſs, as you may read, 2 Chron. xxxiii. yet found mercy. And if you view that catalogue of ſinners, given in 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. you will ſeem to find among them the very forlorn hope of deſperate ſinners, advanced neareſt to hell of any men upon earth; yet ſee, ver. 11. what is ſaid of ſome of them: " And ſuch were " ſome of you; but ye are waſhed, but ye are juſtified."

All theſe things plainly ſhew (I ſay not the certainty that you ſhall be, but) the poſſibility that you may be pardoned; which is a mercy and encouragement unſpeakable.

§ III. *The converſion of profane ones highly probable.*

AND becauſe Satan labours to diſcourage them that are gone in ſin ſo far as you are, by cutting off all hopes of mercy from them, and bringing them to this deſperate concluſion; damned we know we ſhall, and muſt be; and therefore as good be damned for more, as leſs. If we had lived ſober, and civil lives, we might have had ſome hope; but becauſe we have no hope, it is as good for us to take our full ſwing in ſin, as to think of returning by repentance and converſion, ſo late in the day as this is.

To obviate this deadly ſnare of Satan, I ſhall here further add, That there is not only a poſſibility of your recovery, but, in ſome reſpect, a ſtronger poſſibility, that ſuch as you may be converted and ſaved, than there is for thoſe who have led a ſmoother, and more civil life in the world, and wholly truſt to their own civility for their ſalvation, inſtead of the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

This plainly appears, by that convictive expreſſion of Chriſt to the Scribes and Phariſees, Matth. xxi. 31. "Verily, I ſay "unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the king-"dom of heaven before you." Publicans, the moſt infamous among men; and harlots, the worſt of women; yet theſe are ſooner wrought over to Chriſt by faith and repentance, than the more civil, and ſelf-righteous Scribes and Phariſees.

And indeed, it is far eaſier to come at the conſciences of ſuch ſinners by conviction, than at the others; they having nothing to ward off the ſtroke of conviction, it muſt fall directly, and immediately upon their conſciences. The moſt ſmooth, and civil part of the world, truſt to their own righteouſneſs; and this ſelf-confidence, like armour of proof, reſiſts all attempts to bring them to Chriſt for righteouſneſs. Nothing fixes men in a ſtate of evil, more than a ſtrong conceit that their condition is good.

But ſuch as you are, whoſe whole lives have been polluted with profaneneſs, and all impiety, your conſciences will more eaſily receive convictions of your preſent danger, and of the neceſſity of a ſpeedy, and thorough change. You cannot think, as others do, that you need no repentance, or reformation. In this reſpect, therefore, you lie nearer the door of hope and mercy, than other ſinners do.

If therefore it ſhall pleaſe the Lord, (whoſe grace is rich and free to the vileſt of ſinners) to pluck out ſuch as you, as brands out of the burning, by thorough converſion to Chriſt; you will not only become real Chriſtians, (as all true converts are) but the moſt excellent, uſeful, and zealous amongſt all Chriſtians. As you will be moſt eminent inſtances of his grace, ſo you will be the moſt eminent inſtruments for his glory. As you have gone beyond other ſinners in wickedneſs, ſo you will ſtrive to exceed them all in your love to Chriſt. Luke vii. 47. "She "loved much, for much was forgiven her." You will never think you can do enough for him, who hath done ſuch great things for you.

Who more fierce, and vile, before converſion, than Paul,

who was a blaſphemer, a perſecutor, and injurious? 1 Tim. i. 13. and who, among all the ſervants of Chriſt, loved or laboured for him more than he? How did he rather fly, than travel up and down the world, in a flame of zeal for Chriſt? As you have been ringleaders in ſin, ſo you will not endure to come behind any in zeal and love to the Lord Jeſus: Yet not thinking this way to make him a requital for the injuries you have done him; (that would be the moſt injurious act of all the reſt) but to teſtify this way the deep ſenſe you have of the riches and tranſcendency of his goodneſs and mercy to you, above all others.

§ IV. *Converſion frequently and fatally miſtaken.*

BUT here I muſt warn you of ſome common, but moſt dangerous miſtakes, committed in the world, with reſpect to converſion unto God: Except theſe be ſeaſonably prevented, or removed, none of you will ever ſtir, or move further than you are towards Chriſt. Amongſt others, beware eſpecially of theſe three following fatal miſtakes; that of,

1. Baptiſmal regeneration.
2. Common profeſſion of Chriſtianity.
3. Formality in religious duties.

1. There is a notion ſpread among men, and almoſt every where obtaining, that the ſcriptures mean nothing elſe by converſion, but *to be baptized in our infancy into the viſible church*: and that this ordinance having paſſed upon them long ago, they are ſufficiently converted already; and that men make but a needleſs ſtir and buſtle in the world, about any other, or further converſion.

But, ſirs, I beſeech you, conſider how dangerous a thing it is, to take your own ſhadow for a bridge; and venturing upon it, drown yourſelves. If baptiſm be converſion enough, why doth Chriſt ſay, Mark xvi. 16. "He that believeth, and "is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be "damned?" Baptiſm, without faith, ſignifies nothing to ſalvation; but faith, without baptiſm, (where it cannot be had) ſecures ſalvation. And why doth the apoſtle ſay, Gal. vi. 25. "Neither circumciſion, nor uncircumciſion availeth any thing, "but a new creature?" Or what needed Chriſt to have preſſed and inculcated the indiſpenſible neceſſity of regeneration upon Nicodemus, as he doth, John iii. 3, 5, 7. who had been many years a circumciſed Jew? This your dangerous dependance upon your baptiſmal regeneration, is what hath given ſuch deep offence, and prejudice to many (though without juſt

cauſe) againſt that ordinance. I lament it as much as they, that men ſhould turn it into ſuch a deadly ſnare to their own ſouls, yet will ſtill honour Chriſt's abuſed ordinance.

2. Some think, the common profeſſion of Chriſtianity makes men Chriſtians enough; they are no Heathens, Mahometans, or idolatrous Papiſts; but Proteſtants, within the pale of the true church; that is, profeſſed reformed Chriſtians.

But, friends, I beg you to conſider that convictive text, 1 Cor. iv. 20. "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in "power." Many there be, that in words confeſs Chriſt, but in works they deny him. And why were the fooliſh virgins (that, is profeſſed reformed Chriſtians) ſhut out of the kingdom of God; if the lamp of verbal profeſſion, without the oil of internal godlineſs, were enough for our ſalvation? Mat. xxv. 3, 12. Believe it, ſirs, many will claim acquaintance with Chriſt upon this account, and expect favour from him in the great day, of whom he will profeſs he never knew them, Mat. vii. 22. Chriſt need not have put men upon ſtriving, as in an agony, to enter in at the ſtrait gate; if baptiſm in our infancy, or verbal profeſſion of Chriſtianity, were all the difficulties men had to encounter in the way to heaven.

3. Formality in external duties of religion, is another fatal miſtake of converſion. Have not theſe been the inward thoughts of your hearts? As bad as we are, though we take liberty to ſwear, be drunk, and unclean ſometimes; yet we ſay our prayers, keep our church, and hope for heaven and ſalvation, as well as thoſe that are more preciſe.

But tell me, gentlemen, ſeriouſly, what do you ſay, or plead for yourſelves more in all this, than thoſe convicted hypocrites did, Iſa. lviii. 2. "Yet they ſeek me daily, and delight to "know my ways, as a nation that did righteouſneſs, and for-"ſook not the ordinances of their God: They aſk of me the "ordinances of juſtice, they take delight in approaching to "God." Or to come nearer yet to your caſe, and cut off, at one ſtroke, for ever this vain plea of yours, read and ponder God's own cenſure of it, in Jer. vii. 8, 9. 10, 11, 12. "Be-"hold, ye truſt in lying words, that cannot profit. Will ye "ſteal, murder, commit adultery, and ſwear falſely, *&c.* and "come and ſtand before me in this houſe, which is called by "my name, and ſay, We are delivered to do all theſe abomi-"nations? Is this houſe, which is called by my name, be-"come a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have "ſeen it, ſaith the Lord; but go ye now to my place, which

" was in Shiloh, where I ſet my name at the firſt, and ſee what " I did to it, for the wickedneſs of my people Iſrael."

§ V. *Of the nature of true converſion.*

YOU have heard, that converſion does not conſiſt in theſe external things; at your eternal peril be it, if you truſt in them: But true converſion is the turning of the whole man to God, Acts xxvi. 18. it is nothing leſs, than the total change of the inward temper, and frame of the heart, and the external courſe of the life, Iſa. lv. 8. It is not the cool confeſſion, but the real forſaking of ſin, in which we ſhall find mercy, Prov. xxviii. 13. Thy heart and will, love and delight, muſt turn ſin out, and take Chriſt in, or thou art no goſpel-convert. A true convert loaths every ſin, and himſelf for ſin, Ezek. xxxvi. 31. but general confeſſions of ſin are conſiſtent with the full dominion of ſin. Moreover, in all true converſion there is a poſitive turning unto God, a whole heart-choice of him, for your ſupreme and ultimate happineſs and portion, Pſal. lxxiii. 25. and of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as your Prince and Saviour, Acts v. 31. And anſwerably, it will devote your whole life to his ſervice and glory, Phil. i. 21. And thus it brings forth the new man, and the whole frame of your heart and life is marvellouſly changed and altered, 2 Cor. v. 17. " Old things are paſſed away, behold, all things are become " new."

It may be, you will think ſuch a change as this impoſſible to be made upon you. And ſo it is indeed, until the day of God's power come, Pſal. cx. 3. What! to forſake with loathing your old companions, and courſes, which you have ſo long lived with and delighted in; and to embrace with higheſt pleaſure, ſtrict godlineſs, which you have ſo loathed, and ridiculed! This would be a ſtrange alteration indeed: But as ſtrange as it ſeems to be, it will be effected in a moment, when God fulfils that gracious promiſe (as I hope he is now doing) to you, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. " A new heart alſo will I give " you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you." Operations follow nature: When the heart of a beaſt was given to that great king Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. v. 21. his dwelling was with the wild aſſes; they fed him with graſs, like oxen. But let the ſpirit of a man return to him again, and he'll bluſh to think of his brutiſh company, and way of life; and ſo will you of yours alſo. As marvellous a change as this, has paſſed upon as eminent and notorious ſinners as yourſelves, Gal. i. 22. the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh can with eaſe and ſpeed

produce all this by that Almighty Power, whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf.

§ VI. *Of the hazards attending converſion.*

IF the Lord ſhall, in his rich grace and mercy to your ſouls, ſtir up in them the thoughts and reſolutions of a change of your courſe; great care ought to be taken, in the time of this change, leſt they miſcarry in their remove from one ſtate to another; multitudes miſcarry betwixt a ſtate of profaneneſs, and true godlineſs. To continue in the ſtate of profaneneſs, is to be certainly loſt; and ſo it is to take up ſhort of Chriſt, in mere civility and formality in religion. This middle ſtate takes up multitudes by the way, who do but change the open road, for a more private way to hell.

Mere civilized nature is unregenerated nature ſtill; "They "return, but not to the moſt High; they are like a deceitful "bow," ſaith the prophet, Hoſea vii. 16. They ſeem to aim at Chriſt, and ſalvation; but, as an arrow from a weak bow, it goes not home; or, as from a deceitful bow, it ſlants aſide, and miſſes the mark. It is true, they are not openly profane, as they were before; but they take up, and ſettle in an unregenerate ſtate ſtill: Their condition is the ſame, though their company be not.

This is excellently ſet forth by our Saviour, Matth. xii. 43, 44, 45. the devil may be caſt out as a profane devil, and yet keep his propriety ſtill as a formal devil. The ſenſe of that text is well expreſſed by one, in this note upon it: That a reſtraint by formality, keeps the devil's propriety, and diſpoſes the ſoul to final apoſtacy. You are as far from Chriſt and ſalvation, under the power of formality, as you were before. He that is cured of a fever, hath no great cauſe to rejoice, if his fever has left him under a conſumption, which will kill him as ſurely, though it may be leſs violently, or ſpeedily.

§ VII. *Of the abſolute neceſſity of a thorough change.*

WHatever the difficulties and hazards are, that attend this change by converſion unto God, the change itſelf is abſolutely and indiſpenſibly neceſſary to every man's ſalvation. The door of ſalvation can never be opened, without the key of regeneration. Chriſt aſſures civil and formal Nicodemus, "That except he be born again, he cannot ſee the king-"dom of God," John iii. 3. Think not converſion to be the

attainment of some singular and extraordinary Christians, for it is the very point upon which every man's eternal happiness or misery depends. There is one law for all the world; they must be changed, or damned: No restitutions or reformations, no common gifts or abilities, no religious duties or services, can save any man from hell, without a change by thorough conversion. Rom. viii. 8. "They that are in the flesh, cannot please God."

Satisfy and please not yourselves with this: Though we live in sin, yet God is a merciful God. We will confess our sins to him, say our prayers, keep our church; and no doubt but God will be merciful to us, as well as others. Consider it, man, that this merciful God is also a God of truth; and this God of truth hath plainly assured thee, that all these external things signify nothing to thy salvation, unless thou become a new creature, Gal. vi. 15. and that thou must be born again, John iii. 3. Say not, without this you will hope in God: If you hope in God, you must hope in his word, Psalm cxix. 81. Now where will you find that word in the Bible, that warrants the hope of salvation in the unregenerate person? All scriptural hope is of a purifying nature, and evermore productive of an holy life, 1 John iii. 3.

If you say, Christ died for the greatest of sinners, and you trust to be saved through him; it is true, he did so, but conversion is his only method of salvation, Tit. ii. 14. and those that are not washed by sanctification, have no part in him, or in his blood, John xiii. 8. He came not to save men continuing in their sins, but to save his people from their sins, Matth. i. 21. His way is to lead you through sanctification unto salvation, 2 Thes. ii. 13. If you have a mind to see whom, and how he saves; you have it before your eyes, Tit. ii. 14. "Who "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous "of good works." Those only are saved by him, that "denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, live *not only* soberly and "righteously, *but* godly in this present world."

And this is the change I am here pressing you to; and until this change be made, you cannot find yourselves within the compass of any covenant-promise, Eph. ii. 12. but if you will turn to Heb. xii. 14. you may, the very next minute, find yourselves barred out of heaven by a scripture threatening. Let no man, therefore, impose so great a cheat upon his own soul, as once to imagine, that any thing short of

found conversion can ever put him out of the danger of damnation.

§ VIII. *Every man might do more than he doth, towards his own conversion.*

IT is not in any man's power to convert himself; but yet because every man might do more towards it than he doth do, and doth it not, he is justly chargeable with his own damnation. We are bid, and bound to strive to enter in at the strait gate, Luke xiii. 24. It is true, a man, in his natural state, can do nothing that is spiritually, or supernaturally good; yet he can do, and forbear to do many things, the doing or forbearing of which, have a true (though remoter) tendency to his conversion; and not doing, or forbearing of them, his destruction is of and from himself.

You can, if you will, forbear to swear, and blaspheme the name of God. Who can, or does compel, or force your tongues to it? The devil can tempt, but not compel them: you can, if you will stop, when nature is duly refreshed. Your wicked companions can provoke, but not force you. You can, if you please, shun lascivious books, and company, and keep your bodies chaste, at least from the external acts of uncleanness.

And why cannot you (if you please) perform, as well as neglect, the external acts of religious duties? The same feet that carry you to a tavern, can carry you to your closets, if you please to have them do so. Nor do I know any reason why you cannot compose yourselves, when engaged in God's public or private worship, to a close and serious attendance to those duties. The application of the mind to what is spoken is of great concernment to you; and if an unsanctified minister can apply his thoughts to compose a sermon, and preach it; I see no reason why an unsanctified hearer may not also compose, and apply his mind to hear it. And I am past all doubt, that something may be done beyond all this. You have some power certainly to reflect upon, and consider what concernment you have in the things you read or hear; and how they agree, or disagree with your experience.

Now, if men would but do this, (which certainly they have a power to do) though they cannot convert themselves, yet hereby they would lie in the hopeful way of converting grace; which is more than they could ever yet be persuaded to do. And though there be no positive certainty, or assurance, t'

converſion and ſalvation ſhall follow theſe acts; yet hope and probability are engagements enough. Hope ſets all the world on work, without aſſurance. The ploughman ploughs in hope, and the merchant ventures in hope. Do but as much for your ſouls, as theſe do for their bodies.

§ IX. *Temptations and diſcouragements in the way of converſion.*

BUT here I expect to be encountered by all the policy and power of hell. Satan, and your own luſts, are in confederacy, to turn away your minds from ſuch counſel and perſuaſions as theſe. They will tell you, this is no proper ſeaſon to mind your converſion; it is either too ſoon, or too late; You have not yet had pleaſure enough in ſin, or ſo much as hath put you beyond all hopes of mercy: That religion is a melancholy thing, and if once you look that way, you will never have a merry day, or hour more; with a thouſand ſuch damps and diſcouragements.

But pray, gentlemen, do ſo much, at leaſt for your ſouls, before you turn away your ear from the inſtructions of life, as to hear theſe matters examined: If they are not worth that, they are worth nothing.

I will ſuppoſe you in the flower and vigour of your youth, and this dangerous ſeaſon now nicked with a more dangerous temptation; that it is too ſoon to mind ſuch ſerious matters now: You have not yet had your full pleaſure out of ſin.

Need I to ſpend a word, to refute and baffle ſuch a temptation as this? I doubt not, but you yourſelves can eaſily do it. Aſk yourſelves, Sirs, if ſentence of death were paſſed upon you by men, (as it is by God, John iii. 18. "He that believeth "not, is condemned already,") would you think a pardon could come too ſoon? Be aſſured, every bit of bread you eat, is the bread of the condemned; you are in danger of hell every day, and hour: There wants nothing but a ſword, a bullet, a ſhipwreck, or diſeaſe, (of which multitudes wait on you every day) to put you beyond mercy, and all hopes of mercy. And can you get too ſoon (think you) out of this danger and miſery? O why do you linger any longer? The danger is too great and imminent, to admit one hour's longer delay.

And it is as ſtrange and ſtrong a deluſion on the other ſide, to fancy it is now too late: The vanity and groundleſſneſs of this, hath been evinced in the ſecond ſection, to which I refer you for full ſatisfaction.

And for the loſs of your pleaſures, by converſion to God,

what is the thinnest and silliest pretence of all the rest: That is the same thing, as to imagine it is to a thirsty man's loss, to leave the puddle waters of a broken cistern, to enjoy the crystal streams of a flowing fountain; for the pleasures of an alehouse, playhouse, or whorehouse, to be sweeter than the light of God's countenance, the comforts of his pardon, or the lively hopes of glory with him in heaven; of which you read, 1 Pet. i. 8.

Poor men! O that you did but once know what the life of holiness, and dedication to God is! what the seals, earnest, and first-fruits of his Spirit are! How willingly and joyfully would you trample all the sordid pleasures of sin under your feet, to enjoy them!

§ X. *Motives and considerations perfuading to conversion.*

THis short discourse shall wind up itself in motives and considerations, to prevail with you, not only to make the first step out of profaneness to civility; but the other necessary and happy step too; for the Lord's sake, gentlemen, that blessed step beyond mere civility, to serious godliness.

O that I knew what words to chuse, and what arguments to urge, that might possibly prevail with you! My witness is in heaven, I would do any thing within my power, to procure your temporal and eternal happiness. I beg you, in the bowels of Christ Jesus, as if I were upon my bended knees before your feet, turn not away your eye nor ear from these discourses: Ponder and consider, once and again, what hath been rationally debated in the first part, about your reformation, and what hath, and shall be offered, in this second part.

'O my God! thou that hast counted me faithful, and put 'me into the ministry; thou that hast inclined my heart to 'make this attempt, and encouraged me with hope, that it 'shall not be in vain to all them that read it, if it must be so 'to some; I beseech thee, lay the hand of thy Spirit upon the 'heart and hand of thy servant; strengthen and guide him in 'drawing the bow of the gospel, and directing the arrows, 'that they may strike the mark he aims at, even the convicti-'on and conversion of lewd and dissolute sinners. Command 'these considerations to stay and settle in their hearts, till they 'bring them fully over to thyself in Christ.'

Consideration 1. And first, O that you would consider how the whole of your life past hath been cast away in vain, as to the great end and business you came into the world for. You

have breathed many years, but not lived one day to God. Your conſciences could never yet prevail with you to get out of the noiſe and hurry of the world, and go along with it into ſome private retiring-place, to debate the ſtate of your ſouls, and think cloſe (but for one hour) on ſuch awful ſubjects as God, ſoul, Chriſt, and eternity, heaven, hell, death, and judgment. Do you think, gentlemen, that you came into this world to do nothing elſe but to eat and drink, ſport and play, ſleep and die? Aſk yourſelves, I beſeech you, whether the life you have hitherto lived, has looked to your own eyes like an earneſt flight from hell, and a ſerious purſuit of heaven and ſalvation? How much nearer are you got to Chriſt now, than you were when in your cradles? The ſweeteſt, and fitteſt part of your life, is paſſed away in vanity, and there is no calling one day, or hour of it, back again.

Conſideration 2. Conſider, gentlemen, for Chriſt Jeſus ſake, you have yet an opportunity to be eternally happy, if you will flight and neglect opportunities of ſalvation no longer; the door of mercy is not yet finally ſhut up: The Lord Jeſus yet waits to be gracious to you. Such is his aſtoniſhing grace and mercy, he will pardon and paſs by all that you have done againſt him, if now, after all, you will but come unto him, that you may have life. *Turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?* Your ſwearing, and blaſpheming, your drunkenneſs, uncleanneſs, and enmity at godlineſs, ſhall never be mentioned, if you will yet repent and return. Ezek. xviii. 21, 22. "If the "wicked will turn from all his ſins that he hath committed, "and keep all my ſtatutes, and do that which is lawful and "right; he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die. All his tranſ"greſſions that he hath committed, they ſhall not be mention"ed unto him."

If you ſay, theſe are hard and impoſſible terms to nature, it is true, they are ſo, and God's end in urging them here upon you, is to convince you of your natural impotence, and drive you to Chriſt; that by union with him, the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in you.

Conſideration 3. Let it be thoroughly conſidered, it is no leſs than ſalvation, and your own ſalvation too, which depends upon your converſion. How diligent was Chriſt in purchaſing ſalvation! how negligent and remiſs are we in applying it! O what compoſitions of ſloth and ſtupidity are unconverted ſinners! how do they ſit with folded arms, as if it were eaſy to periſh? Is this your running and ſtriving to obtain the palms and crowns of immortal glory? *Work out* (ſaith the a-

poſſible, Phil. ii. 12, 13.) *your own ſalvation with fear and trembling.* It is for ſalvation, and nothing leſs, you are here preſſed to ſtrive: And what care, paine, or ſolicitude of ours, can be equal and proportionate to ſo great a thing as ſalvation? If every thought of the heart were reſcued from all other concerns, and the mind ſtand continually fixed with utmoſt intention upon this ſubject, ſurely ſuch a ſubject deſerves it all, and much more.

But when you conſider it is not another's, but your own ſalvation you are ſtriving for; how powerful ſhould the principle of ſelf-preſervation awaken and invigorate your utmoſt endeavours after it! The law of charity, and bowels of mercy, would compel us to do much to ſave the body, and much more the ſoul of another: And will they move us to do nothing for our ſalvation?

Say not, if I ſhould be careleſs and neglective, yet God is good, and gracious; if this ſeaſon be neglected, there are more to come: Alas! that is more than you know. It is poſſible your eternal happineſs may depend upon the improvement of this preſent opportunity; there is much of time in a ſhort opportunity.

Conſideration 4. Do you think your hearts would be in ſuch a dead, careleſs, and unconcerned frame, about this great and awful matter of your converſion and ſalvation; if thoſe things were now before your eyes, which certainly and ſhortly muſt be before them!

How rational and neceſſary is it, for you now to ſuppoſe thoſe very things as preſent before you, which you know to be near you, and a few days or hours will make preſent? Here let me make a few ſuppoſitions, ſo rational, becauſe certainly future and near, that no wiſe man will, or dare to ſlight them, as fictions or chimera's.

Suppoſition 1. Suppoſe yourſelves now upon your death-beds, your hearts and breaths failing, your eyes and heart-ſtrings breaking, all earthly comforts failing, and ſhrinking from you; theſe things you know, are unavoidable, and muſt ſhortly befal you, Eccl. viii. 8. ſuppoſe alſo, in theſe your laſt extremities, your conſciences ſhould awake (as probably they will, there being now no more charms of pleaſure, and ſinful companions, to divert or ſtupify them) what a caſe will you find yourſelves in! what a cold ſweat will then lie upon your panting boſoms! what a pale horror will appear in your countenances? Will you not then wiſh, O that the time I have ſpent in vanity had been ſpent in the duties of ſerious piety! O that

I had been as careful of my ſoul, as I was of my body! What are the pains of mortification, which I was ſo afraid of, to the pains of damnation, which I begin to ſcent, and apprehend! I thought it hard to pray, mourn, and deny myſelf; but I ſhall find it harder to grapple with the wrath of an incenſed God to all eternity.

Suppoſition 2. Suppoſe yourſelves now to be at the judgment-ſeat of God, where you know you muſt be immediately after death; or, that you did behold the proceſs, and awful ſolemnity of the general judgment of the great day! both which appearances are indiſputably ſure, and certain, Heb. ix. 27. 2 Cor. v. 10. Suppoſe you ſaw all Adam's poſterity there aſſembled, and convened, even multitudes, multitudes which no man can number; all theſe ſeparated into two grand diviſions; Chriſt, the ſupreme and final Judge, upon the judgment-ſeat; the Chriſtleſs, and unregenerate world, quivering at the bar; the laſt ſentence pronouncing on them; the executioners ſtanding ready to take them away: Will you not then (think you) be ready to tear yourſelves with indignation, for this your ſupine and ſottiſh careleſſneſs? A voice from the throne, like the voice of a trumpet, ſounds a loud alarm to all careleſs, negligent, and trifling ſinners: And this is the voice, if you will not be in the ſame caſe with the miſerable, condemned world. Put to it heartily, then, in the uſe of all means with God and men, for converting and regenerating grace now, which is the only thing that differences your ſtate from thoſe miſerable wretches then.

Suppoſition 3. Suppoſe God did but give you a foreſight, or foretaſte in the terrors of your conſciences, of that damnation you have jeſted at, and ſo often imprecated upon yourſelves: Did you but lie one night in that plight poor Spira, and many others beſide him have done, with the terrors of the Lord upon your ſpirits, under horror, and remorſe of conſcience, which are the firſt niblings and bitings of that worm which ſhall never die:

——*Tum pallida mens eſt*
Criminibus, tacita ſudant praecordia culpa. *

Paleneſs and horror, fear and trembling, upon the outward and inward man, whilſt God is making the immediate impreſſions of his wrath upon the conſcience; ſeeming to want ſome one to let out that miſerable, wretched ſoul, that is weary to

* The mind now conſcious of its guilt,
Feels hell within: the reſt's a horrid fight.

stay any longer in the body, and yet afraid to be dislodged, lest its condition be made worse by the exchange: do you think you would ever imprecate damnation any more? And yet all these terrors and horrors upon the conscience, are but as the sweating of marble-stone, before the great rains fall.

But what if God should give you a vision of hell itself, and of the unconceivable, and inexpressible misery of those desperate, and forlorn wretches, that lie there sweltering, and groaning under the heavy pressures of the wrath of a great and terrible God, immediately, and everlastingly transacted upon their souls? Would you ever jest with damnation any more, as with an harmless thing? Nay, would you not strive to the uttermost, to flee from this wrath to come? Do you not seem to hear, in this rational and just supposition, and doleful cry coming from hell, and the state of the damned, with this very sound and sense? 'Good souls, if ever you expect 'to be delivered from this state, and place of torments, strive, 'to the utmost, strive while you have opportunity, strive 'whilst breath and strength do last, to flee from, and escape, 'by a sound conversion, this doleful state of eternal damnation.'

Supposition 4. Lastly, and in a word, suppose you had a vision of heaven, as Stephen and Paul had in the body; suppose you saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at his right hand, surrounded with the triumphant myriads of palm-bearing saints, singing Hosanna's and Hallelujahs to God, and the Lamb for ever; and blessing, praising, and admiring him that gave them another spirit, vastly different from that which governs such as you: Blessing the Lord, that enabled them to be praying and praising, whilst others were cursing and swearing; to be sighing and groaning for sin in secret, whilst others were shouting and singing in taverns and ale-houses; to beat down their bodies, and keep them under, whilst others were pleasing and gratifying their lusts; would you still drive that course you do? Well, sirs, if ever you expect to come where these blessed ones are, you must take the course they did. Let this be your endeavour, and it shall be my fervent, and hearty prayer.

A CORONATION-SERMON, PREACHED AT DARTMOUTH.

CANT. iii. 11.

Go forth, ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his eſpouſals, and in the day of the gladneſs of his heart.

A Crown is the top of earthly glory, the culminating point of human dignity. Pſalm xxi. 2, 3. "Thou haſt given "him his heart's deſire; thou haſt ſet a crown of pure gold up- "on his head." The ambition of the many, moves in various ſpheres below it; the ambition of none aſpires above it, except it be that *anomalous monſter*, the man of ſin, who affects to ſit in the very throne of God, and exalts himſelf above all that is called God, 2 Theſ. ii. 4.

When God puts a crown upon the head, and a ſceptre into the hand of a man, he engraves upon that man (in a qualified ſenſe) both his name, and the lively characters of his Majeſty and authority, Pſal. lxxxii. 6. "I have ſaid, ye are gods, and "all of you the children of the Moſt High." But yet, in all the grants and conveyances of Heaven, there is always a reſervation and ſalvo to the divine prerogative, to * diſplace it at pleaſure, and ſet it upon what head he ſhall pleaſe, Ezek. xxi. 26. "Thus ſaith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, and take "off the crown: This ſhall not be the ſame: Exalt him that is "low, and abaſe him that is high."

Though dominion be not founded in grace, yet grace both embelliſhes, and ſecures the domnion of men. The princes of the earth owe fealty and homage to Jeſus Chriſt; and had ſome of them been more

Pſal. ii. 10, 11, 12.

* The Lord dethrones kings, diſpoſes of kingdoms.

subject to his laws, their kingdoms had flouriſhed, and their government been more auſpicious.

The coronation-day of a king, is, in a ſenſe, the marriage-day betwixt him and his people, and is accordingly ſolemnized with all the ſigns and demonſtrations of joy and gladneſs: *For the ſhout of a king is among them.* Thus when the crown of Iſrael was ſet upon the head of Solomon, the ſcripture repreſents their exuberant joy, in an elegant, and lofty hyperbole: 1 Kings i. 40. "And all the people came up after him; and the peo-"ple piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, ſo that the "earth rent with the ſound of them."

Carnal men rejoice carnally, and ſpiritual men ſhould rejoice ſpiritually: The moſt glorious part of the ſolemnity of ſuch a day, conſiſts in,

1. Praiſes and prayers for him that wears the crown.

2. In a ſpiritual improvement of the action to ourſelves.

1. In praiſes and prayers for the king, whom God hath ſet over us. Your prayers and praiſes reflect more glory upon the crown, than all the jewels and ſparkling ſtones with which it ſhines: And ſo I am perſuaded our king will account it; according to Zech. xii. 5. "The governors of Judah ſhall ſay in "their hearts, The inhabitants of Jeruſalem ſhall be my "ſtrength in the Lord of Hoſts their God."

Praiſe thy God, O England! for ſetting thy crown this day upon the head of a Proteſtant prince; who accounted not his treaſures, or blood, dear unto him, to redeem the intereſt of Chriſt out of the dangers that were ready to ſwallow it up.

Pray fervently for your king this day: The concernments of the people of God are ſo great in him, as that they exact from all the ſaints the uttermoſt importunity in prayer.

(1.) That God would cleanſe and waſh the crown of England from all that guilt and pollution it hath contracted under former governments, that the ſins of the crown may not deſcend with it.

(2.) That the royal head on which it ſhall be ſet this day, may be filled with the wiſdom of God, and matched with an holy heart, inflamed with love to God, and zeal for his glory.

(3.) That as ſoon as men have ſet the crown upon his head, he may chearfully take it off again, and caſt it at the feet of Jeſus Chriſt, as the twenty-four elders did, Rev. iv. 10. "And "the twenty-four elders fell down before him that ſat on "the throne, and worſhipped him that liveth for ever and ever, "and caſt their crowns before the throne," *&c.*

(4.) That God would make the crown ſit eaſy, and long upon his royal head. Eaſy, becauſe crowns are uſually lined with thorny cares; and long, for the church's peace and tranquillity.

Secondly, The next thing belonging to the due ſolemnity of this day, will be the ſpiritual improvement of the whole ſcene of actions, to your own inſtruction and ſpiritual advantage; and this will be much more glorious, than all the triumphant arches, royal robes, thundering guns, and loud acclamations of the people. To this purpoſe, I have choſen this text, for the direction, and ſpiritualizing of the duties of the day. "Go forth, ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon, "with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, in the "day of his eſpouſals, and in the day of the gladneſs of his "heart."

This book of the Canticles, is a ſpiritual *epithalamium*, ſung in parts, betwixt the heavenly Bridegroom, and the bride. The matter of it is moſt ſpiritual and weighty, the ſtile of it rapturous and lofty, the intimate union and communion of Chriſt and the church, is elegantly illuſtrated in an *allegory* of marriage: But nothing is found here light, or obſcene.

———Procul hinc, procul eſte profani:
Nil hic niſi caſtum. *

It is a cryſtal ſtream of pure ſpiritual love, ſliding ſweetly betwixt two pleaſant banks, Chriſt and the church.

In the ninth and tenth verſes you have the deſcription of a triumphant chariot, prepared by king Solomon for the daughters of Jeruſalem: "The pillars thereof of ſilver, the bottom "of gold, the covering of purple, and the midſt thereof paved "with love." A chariot is an inſtrument framed for eaſy, ſafe, and honourable conveyance: This chariot is the covenant of grace, fitted by Chriſt for the ſafe and honourable tranſporting of his bride, the church, through this world, to her ſtately pavilion, or glorious manſion in the higheſt heavens.

But how ſtately and magnificent ſoever this royal chariot be, he that contrived and framed it is much more glorious to behold: And therefore, in the next words, which are my text, believers are ſummoned, and invited to behold and contemplate Chriſt, that framed it: "Go forth, ye daughters of Zion, and "behold king Solomon, with his crown," *&c.* In which words we have,

1. The *ſpectators* ſummoned, or invited.

* Hence, far hence what e'er's profane:
There's nought to feed your unchaſte flame,

2. The *ſpectacle* they are invited to ſee.

1. The *ſpectators* invited; the daughters of Zion. By Zion, underſtand the church; and by the daughters of Zion, the members of the church, or every particular believer: Theſe are here invited, or ſummoned to go forth, *i. e.* of their entangling, diverting temptations; and to behold, *viz.* by the eye of faith, this moſt glorious, and heart-raviſhing object.

2. The *ſpectacle* they are invited to behold and contemplate; *king Solomon, with his crown*, &c. the moſt illuſtrious, glorious, and raviſhing ſight that ever the eyes of men did, or ſhall behold. By king Solomon, underſtand Chriſt; of whom Solomon in this book, is the figure, or ſhadow; yet one to whom Solomon, in all his glory was but a depainted ſun on a ſign-poſt, to the ſun in the mid-heavens, ſhining in all his glory.

And by his crown, underſtand not any material crown, as that of Solomon's was; but the glory and honour that is put upon Chriſt, the king of Zion; of which glory a crown is the emblem.

What crown is here meant, interpreters are not all agreed about it; ſome would have it to be underſtood of our human nature, which he was crowned withal by his mother Mary, of whom he took it: But though this aſſumption of our nature, put ſuch a crown of glory upon it as it never had before, yet it was rather an obſcuring of Chriſt's glory, than any addition of glory to him.

Others interpret it of the crown of thorns, with which his mother (the Jewiſh church, or ſynagogue) crowned him in the day of his paſſion at Jeruſalem: But this ſeems to be as hard and foreign a ſenſe as the former.

The moſt judicious expoſitors are agreed in a third ſenſe, *viz.* That, by the crown on Chriſt's head, we are to underſtand that glory and honour, which believers give unto, or put upon Chriſt, when in the day of their eſpouſals to him by faith, renouncing Satan, ſin, and all that had exerciſed dominion over them before, with all truſt and dependance on any righteouſneſs of their own, they give their deliberate, full, and hearty conſent, that Chriſt alone ſhall reign over them for ever and ever; ſaying, "The Lord is our King, the Lord is "our Judge, the Lord is our Law giver." Chriſt is "the Lord "our righteouſneſs," and in all things we will obey him. This Chriſt eſteems as a crown of glory put upon his head, in the day of his eſpouſals, and in the day of the gladneſs of his heart. There is no ſuch honour, no ſuch pleaſure a poor ſinner can give to Chriſt, as to believe in him; this is as the putting of a

crown of glory upon his head. It is true, it adds no glory to him, but it is the greateſt manifeſtation of his glory, we are capable to make.

Objection. *But then it will be objected, in what ſenſe believers can be tolerably ſtiled his mother? For the text tells us, it was the crown his mother put upon him.*

Anſwer. They may be ſo ſtiled in a double reſpect:

(1.) Becauſe Chriſt is formed in every believer, he is (in a ſpiritual ſenſe) conceived and formed in their ſouls, as the child is formed in its mother's womb. So the apoſtle ſpeaks, Gal. iv. 19. "My little children, of whom I travail again in "birth, till Chriſt be formed in you."

(2.) In reſpect of the dear affection Chriſt bears to every ſoul that believeth in him. No man loves his brother, ſiſter, or mother, as Chriſt eſteems and loves believers, Mark iii. 34. when he was told, his mother and brethren were without ſeeking him; he ſaid, "Behold my mother, and my brethren: "For whoſoever ſhall do the will of God, the ſame is my bro-"ther, and ſiſter, and mother." The day of a ſinner's conſent to come under Chriſt's government, is the day of his eſpouſals, 2 Cor. xi. 2. and the day of a ſinner's eſpouſals to Chriſt, is the day of the gladneſs of his heart, Luke xv. 32. Thus you have the parts and ſenſe of the text. The point from it is this:

Doct. *That the day of a believer's eſpouſals to Chriſt by faith, is to Chriſt as the day of a king's coronation is to him, even the day of the gladneſs of his heart.*

It is very remarkable, what we find in Luke x. 21. where the Spirit hath carefully recorded one hour of joy in the life of Chriſt; for he had not many, being a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief. "In that hour, Jeſus rejoiced in ſpirit," ſaith the text: And what hour was that? Why, it was the ſame hour in which the ſeventy returned with theſe joyful tidings to him; "Lord, even the devils are ſubject to us "through thy name," ver. 17. The hour when Chriſt ſaw "Satan falling as lightning from heaven," ver. 18. his kingdom tottering, his forces routed by the goſpel, his ſubjects running away to Chriſt, from under his cruel bondage, and made willing to come under his government: "In that hour, "Jeſus rejoiced in ſpirit." This was joyful news to Chriſt, it was the day of the gladneſs of his heart: He had now got a new throne in the ſouls of poor ſinners, over whom the devil and ſin had reigned; this was a crown of glory to Chriſt.

For opening this point, I ſhall diſcourſe theſe three things:

(1.) In what respect a sinner's espousals to Christ resembles the day of a king's coronation over his subjects.

(2.) Wherein these two days differ each from other.

(3.) On what accounts it is the day of the gladness of Christ's heart, as the text calls it.

And then apply it.

Let me shew the resemblances and agreements which are betwixt the day of a king's coronation, and the day of a sinner's espousals to Christ by faith. And this will appear in six respects.

(1.) A king that is duly crowned over his subjects, hath a lawful right to govern them, either by lineal descent, conquest, or compact. Solomon had his right and title to the kingdom, by descent from his royal father David, who, by his last will and testament, constituted and appointed him to be his immediate successor upon the throne of Israel, 1 Kings i. 35. The Roman Caesar's title to that kingdom, was by conquest, and this title was legitimated not only by the Jews acknowledgment of it, but also by Christ's express owning it, and submission to it. The people said, "We have no king but Caesar," John xix. 15. And Christ owned it, Luke xx. 25. when he had paid tribute, saying, "Give unto Caesar, the things that are Caesar's." But David had his title by compact with, and voluntary election of the people: Abner confers with the *elders of Israel* about it, and they meet David at Hebron, and there chuse him king, in the room of Saul, 2 Sam. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. and that in consideration of the eminent service he had performed for that kingdom, in delivering them from their mortal enemies the Philistines, enemies to their religion, and civil liberties. And certainly, the crown of Israel was not a reward above the merit of such a performance. "Then came all the "tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and said, Behold we "are thy bone, and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul "was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out, and brought-"est in Israel: And the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed "my people Israel; and thou shalt be a captain over Israel. "So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron, and "king David made a league with them in Hebron, before the "Lord: And they anointed David king over Israel."

But Christ hath right to reign over our souls, by all these titles and claims: The throne of our souls, by his Father's constitution and decree, Psalm ii. 6. "Yet have I set my king u-"pon my holy hill of Zion;" by conquest, for he wins it by the sword of his Spirit, before he possesseth it, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

he casts down by spiritual weapons all that opposeth, and brings every thought into obedience to him. And he hath right also, by consent and compact, Psalm cx. 3. "The people shall "be willing in the day of thy power." Of which more anon.

(2.) On the coronation-day, kings appear in all their royal robes, glittering jewels, and all the lustre that can be put upon them; they shine in the eyes of the people more gloriously than all that are about them. *Velut luna, inter minora sidera;* There is none like him, in the beauty of his ornaments. Much more doth Christ excel all others in beauty and glory, in the eyes of those that chuse him for their Lord and King. 1 Pet. ii. 7. "To you that believe, he is precious." Ἡ τιμὴ, Honour itself. Col. i. 17. "He is before all things;" not only in time, or in order, but in real dignity, and solid glory and excellency. So his spouse pronounceth him, Psalm xlv. 2. "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured "into thy lips." And Cant. v. 10. "My beloved is white "and ruddy; the chiefest among ten thousand." Examine and mark all the creatures in both worlds, angels and men, and they bear no more proportion to Christ in glory, than a glow-worm to the sun.

(3.) On the coronation-day, the consent of the people is demanded, and given. Consent was demanded by Abner, in the behalf of David, 2 Sam. iii. 17, 18. and freely given by them, in order to David's coronation, 2 Sam. v. 1, 2, 3, 4. Thus at the coronation of our kings, the consent of the nobles and commonality is demanded on the public theatre, in these words:

"I Here present you such an one, (naming the king) the "rightful inheritor of the crown of this realm: Are you "willing to do your homage, service, and do bounden duty to "him?"

And they say,

"WE are willing; or signify they are so, by their loud "and joyful acclamations."

So it is, when Christ is crowned King over the soul; his right is asserted, and their consent demanded by his ambassadors; the believer manifests his hearty consent, Psalm cx. 3. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." And over all that are made truly willing to receive him, he reigns, and invests them with all the privileges of his kingdom, John i. 12. The unbeliever is not willing to come under Christ's government. John v. 4. *You will not come to me*, &c. And

the iſſue of their unwillingneſs, is their eternal ruin, Luke xix. 27. "But thoſe mine enemies, that would not that I ſhould "reign over them; bring them hither, and ſlay them before "me." Now to make a ſoul truly willing to accept Chriſt's government, and give his conſent to him, four things muſt be done upon, and by ſuch a ſoul: (1.) He muſt be convinced of his ſin and miſery; no man will be willing to change his Lord, whilſt he finds no matter of complaint. (2.) He muſt know, and deliberate upon the terms of Chriſt; for an ignorant perſon cannot be ſaid to conſent; *Non conſentit, qui non ſentit.* Chriſt will have all the world to know his terms, and will not hide the worſt and hardeſt things from them, whether they like them or not: No man ſhall ſay afterwards, I was ſurprized, or impoſed upon; had I known this, I had never conſented to be a Chriſtian. Therefore the hardeſt terms of Chriſtianity are plainly propounded, Luke xiv. 26. and that to cut off all after-pleas and pretences for reſiling from Chriſt, John xvi. 1. "Theſe things have I ſpoken to you, that ye ſhould not "be offended in me." (3.) Upon deliberation, there muſt appear to the ſoul that chuſeth Chriſt, and conſents to his government, a preponderating good; that Chriſt, with all his reproaches and ſufferings, is better than ſin, with all its honours and pleaſures: No man will change for no advantage, much leſs to his loſs. Thus Moſes ſaw more glory and excellency in the very reproaches of Chriſt, than in all the treaſures of Egypt, or pleaſures of ſin, Heb. xi. 25, 26. O! ſaith the ſoul, though there be hard and bitter ſufferings in the way of godlineſs, yet it is infinitely better for me to endure them for Chriſt, than to be damned. And upon balancing the gains and loſſes, the conveniences and inconveniences of Chriſtianity, the odds appear ſo great, that the ſoul pronounceth they are not worthy to be compared, Rom. viii. 18. (4.) When all is done, there muſt be a divine Almighty influence upon the will; without which, men will never heartily conſent to Chriſt's terms. "No man (ſaith Chriſt) can come unto me, except my Fa"ther, which hath ſent me, draw him," John vi. 44. This influence of God upon the will, is in a way ſuitable to its nature, Hoſ. xi. 4. and produceth a conſent without coaction. If the Lord ſhew any man the infinite advantages that come and accrue to his ſoul by Chriſt, this very diſcovery doth, as it were, compel that man to come in to Chriſt; as that expreſſion is uſed, Luke xiv. 23. a ſcripture vilely abuſed in our times. Chriſt compels none into his kingdom, as the Spaniards did the poor Indians to baptiſm, or as others have been

compelled to the Lord's table: He will reign over a willing people, or not reign at all.

(4.) On the coronation-day, a champion appears on the king's behalf, to challenge any that ſhall deny his right, or by allurements or threatenings attempt to draw his ſubjects from their duty and allegiance: He throws down the gantlet, and defies the proudeſt enemy the king hath.

So when Chriſt is crowned King over the ſouls of his people, there is a public defiance bid, a formal challenge given, to all the enemies of Chriſt and his people; as you may read at large, Rom. viii. 33, 34, 35. "Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge "of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth? Who ſhall ſe-"parate us from the love of Chriſt?" Devils and men are deſied to do their worſt. Chriſt muſt reign, till all his enemies are put under his feet: Sin ſhall not have dominion over his people, for they are not under the law, but under grace. Come, Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; come Satan, and all his infernal powers; they are all defied in the name of Chriſt. Believers are his own ſubjects, and none ſhall pluck them out of his hand.

(5.) At, or about, the coronation-day, an act of indemnity, pardon and oblivion, is paſt and publiſhed, pardoning the offences the ſubjects had committed unto that day. Thus it is at the day of Chriſt's coronation over the believer's ſoul, and its eſpouſals to him by faith; all his ſins are pardoned, new and old, great and ſmall. And of this, proclamation is openly made in the goſpel, Acts x. 43. "To him give all the pro-"phets witneſs, that through his name, whoſoever believeth in "him, ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins." O glorious pardon! free without purchaſe; full without exception, and final without revocation. Now there is a goal-delivery, the priſon-doors are open, liberty proclaimed to the captives, Iſa. lxi. 1, 2. The King of Sion is a merciful King, and his ſubjects ſhall find him ſo: They have gladded his heart, by accepting his government; and he will glad theirs, by his pardons: *The Son hath made them free, and they are free indeed.*

(6.) In a word, a coronation-day is a day of gladneſs, a day of joy and triumph; joy diſplays itſelf in the faces of all loyal ſubjects; thoſe only that had rather be under another government, hang the head, and bite the lip.

So it is here; all that are loyal ſubjects to Jeſus Chriſt, rejoice exceedingly in his government; and it muſt needs be ſo, becauſe his kingdom conſiſts in joy in the Holy Ghoſt, Rom. xiv. 17. When Zaccheus came under this King, he came down joyfully, Luke xix. 6, 9. when the eunuch received

him for his Lord and King, he went home rejoicing, Acts viii. 39. when Samaria submitted to his sceptre, there was great joy in that city, Acts viii. 5, 6, 7. and let the joy be what it will, the causes of joy are greater than the joy itself. But those that belong to Satan's kingdom, that love to be under the dominion of sin, and hate the strictness and severities of religion; these are the only malecontents; these fret to see Christ's kingdom enlarged, and secretly plot to destroy it. Thus we see the agreement betwixt the day of a king's coronation over his subjects, and Christ's coronation over believers.

But though they harmonize in these particulars, and divers others that may be named; yet,

2*dly*, There are as many remarkable differences and disagreements betwixt them, but none to the believers loss or disadvantage; for they all fall on his side: As, *ex. gr.*

(1.) It is not the privilege of every subject, no, nor of one among many thousands, to see the king who is crowned over them, to hear his voice, or give their explicit consent in his presence; but every subject in Christ's kingdom doth see Christ by the eye of faith. John vi. 40. "He that seeth the Son, and "believeth on him." Seeing, and believing, are terms convertible; they do all hear his voice, and give their explicit consent to take him for their King. Union with Christ is not a work to be done by a proxy, or representative; but it is the result of a solemn debate betwixt Christ and the soul.

(2.) Kings are crowned over many that love them not, but are filled with prejudice against their persons and government. But it cannot be so in the kingdom of Christ; *To them that believe, he is precious*, 1 Pet. ii. 7. All Christ's subjects love him above father or mother, wife or children, yea, above their own lives; otherwise they cannot be his subjects, Luke xiv. 26. They also delight in his government, and nothing would be more pleasant to their souls, than to find every thought of their heart brought into subjection to him, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. They dare not confederate with his enemies, and will chuse rather to die, than forsake him: They will esteem it a glorious thing, though their right arm should be severed from their shoulder-blade, for their regular endeavours to defend and support the crown upon the head of their royal Master.

(3.) The relation betwixt a king and his subjects, may, and must be dissolved by death: death fears not to arrest the most potent monarch upon his throne, and translate his crown to another head.

But our King, Chriſt, lives for ever; death hath no dominion over him: his kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom, and his dominion that which ſhall have no end, Dan. vii. 13, 14. Death is ſo far from ſeparating Chriſt, and his ſubjects, that it brings them nearer together than ever they were before; it brings them into his immediate preſence, to his facial viſion, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. and fixes them there for ever, 1 Theſſ. iv. 17.

(4.) Kings may degenerate unto tyrants, and ſubjects into rebels; they may undermine the laws, liberties, and religion of their people: they that rule over the people, may make them to howl, Iſa. lii. 5. The world is too full of ſuch inſtances and examples; but Chriſt can never oppreſs his ſubjects. "The ſceptre of his kingdom is a right ſceptre," Pſal. xlv. 6. "His yoke is eaſy, and his burden is light," Matth. xi. 29. And his true ſubjects can never ſhake off their allegiance to him; they ſhall rather die, than do it.

(5.) Kings will not permit their greateſt favourites to ſit in their thrones; it is their peculiar honour, and not communicable to any. Gen. xli. 40. "Only in the throne, I will be "greater than thou," ſaid Pharaoh to his Joſeph.

But Chriſt permits, and appoints all his ſubjects to ſit with him upon his throne, Rev. iii. 21. The glory which God gave him, he hath given to them, John xvii. 22. What king is like Chriſt?

(6.) To conclude: the joy and triumph at a king's coronation, is only among men, in this lower world; but the joy and triumph at Chriſt's coronation, is among angels in heaven, Luke xv. 7. The city of God holds a ſolemn triumph at the converſion of a particular ſinner; what are the ſhouts of men, to the jubilations of angels?

Thus you have ſix particulars wherein they agree, and as many in which they differ.

We come, in the next place, to enquire into,

3*dly*, The reaſons why Chriſt's coronation over believers, is the day of the gladneſs of his heart. And it muſt be ſo,

(1.) Becauſe it is Chriſt's marriage-day, at leaſt the day of his eſpouſals; and the day of marriage, or eſpouſals, is a day of joy and gladneſs. Chriſt hath now a new ſpouſe, a ſoul, in which he never dwelt before; and *as a bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, ſo doth Chriſt over believers*, Iſa. lxii. 5. Here is a new relation entered, and that with the King of kings; the angels of God rejoice exceedingly in it, but much more Chriſt, the bleſſed Bridegroom.

(2.) It is Chriſt's day of conqueſt and victory over Satan, the day in which he hath depoſed him from his throne, Matth.

xii. 29. delivered a soul, of invaluable worth in his eyes, out of the power of darkness, and translated it into his own kingdom, Col. i. 13. and the day of conquest is a day of extraordinary joy and triumph, Isa. ix. 3.

(3.) It is the day in which he receives the fruit and reward of his bloody travels, and bitter agonies: there is now a son, or daughter, born to God, an heir born to the heavenly inheritance. Now it is most pleasant and joyful to Jesus Christ, to see of the travail of his soul, Isa. liii. 11. no satisfaction in this world comparable to it. When a young heir is born to the kingdom and crown of heaven, it deserves a triumph.

(4.) It is the day in which Christ finds a soul that was lost, Luke xv. 5, 6. What joy was it to the Father of the prodigal, when he had found his lost son? Luke xv. 20. there was mirth and music, feasting and rejoicing: "This my Son was lost, "and is found; was dead, and is alive."

Poor sinners are lost creatures by nature, they have lost their God, and therein themselves too. God hath lost, and the devil found, every unregenerate sinner: all strayers from God fall to his share. But this loss is not irrecoverable; the errand and end for which Christ came into the world, was to seek and to save that which was lost, Matth. xviii. 11. and when the sinner that was lost comes home to him by repentance and faith, he obtains the end of his incarnation, life, and death, upon that soul; which cannot but be the day of the gladness of his heart.

If then the day of a king's espousals, or marriage, be a day of joy and gladness to his soul; if a day of conquest, and dividing the spoils, be a day of joy to the conqueror, after a sharp and bloody fight; if it be a joy to a mother, after long and sore travail, to embrace her in her arms, and kiss the child, for whom she endured so many bitter throws; if it be a joy to a father to find and recover a child that was lost, and as dead to him: in a word, if it be high delight and satisfaction to see a great design, on which the heart is intently set, brought at last, by orderly conduct, to the desired happy issue; then let us allow the day of a sinner's coming into Christ by conversion, to be as a coronation-day to a king, the day of his espousals, and of the gladness of his heart.

Use I. This point, like a fruitful root, sends forth many branches, and all loaden with diversity of fruits. The first is for information, in several inferences from it.

Inference 1. Be informed from hence, what is the true caus-

and reason of Satan's rage and spite against the gospel, and the most painful, able, and successful preachers of it in the world. The great design of the gospel, and of all that sincerely preach it, is to win and persuade Satan's subjects to forsake his cruel, unjust, and tyrannical government, and submit to the kingdom and sceptre of the Lord Jesus. What is the preaching of the gospel, but the sounding of a trumpet in the devil's kingdom, to win his subjects from their allegiance to him, to proclaim another king in his territories? Every faithful minister's business is, to gather those wretched vassals of Satan together, and set before them the miserable captivity and bondage they are in, under that tyrant that rules over them, (whose laws, like Draco's, are written in the blood of their souls), to aggravate their sin and misery, and to let them know how willing Christ is to receive and save them, if they will renounce and abandon Satan's government. To set before them the blessed freedom, and glorious privileges of the subjects of Christ; to beseech and persuade them, to break away from their old cruel master, and come over to Christ: to answer all their pleas and objections against it, and to denounce the wrath of God against all the refusers of Christ's gracious proclamation. Now Satan is not ignorant of all this; he esteems the loss of one, much more the revolt of many, a greater mischief, than a king reckons the loss of a kingdom: and to see them break away so fast from him, and be lifted to fight against him; O how it grates that envious spirit, and sharpens his malice against the instruments and agents in this work! 'This, as a * late worthy speaks, torments the foul spirit, to see himself forsaken of his old friends and servants, and this new Lord to come and take away his subjects from him. Hence come persecutions, slanders, *&c.* in showers, upon Christ's faithful ministers.' He knows his kingdom of darkness must vanish, as the light of the gospel rises, and spreads itself. You read, Rev. xiv. 6, 7. of "an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting "gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth." And in ver. 8. you have another angel following him, saying, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen: that great city!* No sooner is the two-edged sword of the gospel drawn, but the next voice is, Victory! victory! He knows every home-charge made by the gospel, will issue in a rout of his infernal legions. Now ministers coming forth against him as heralds, to proclaim Christ's right, and as captains of the army of Christ, their general; he owes them a particular grudge, and seeks every way to stop their

* Gurnal's first part, p. 59.

mouths, and destroy their persons. And surely he hath pusht ed hard at them, and made desperate attempts against them, in our days. No doubt but it was reckoned a great service done him, to shut up the mouths of so many at once; but the time draws nigh, that Babylon must fall, and those that could not lately shew their faces on earth, must fly in the midst of heaven, with the everlasting gospel. The dead witnesses of Christ shall hear shortly a great voice from heaven, saying, *Come up hither*; and they shall ascend in a cloud, their enemies beholding, but not able any more to hinder them.

Inference 2. How causeless, and altogether groundless, are the discouragements and fears of humbled and convinced sinners, that Jesus Christ will reject them, and shut the door of mercy against them, if they should go to him, and cast their poor sinful soul upon him by faith?

Certainly such persons fear, where no fear is. That which is the command of Christ, the earnest desire of his soul, that act which makes his heart glad, as the text speaks; can never meet with such a repulse as you fear. Was ever any king unwilling to have the crown set upon his head? Do they use to frown upon their subjects that are upon the knee, tendering their homage and allegiance to them? No, no; it is the day of the gladness of their hearts. Renounce thy old master Satan, give a bill of divorce to those lusts which have reigned over thy soul, ponder well Christ's terms, and heartily consent to them, and try whether he will not quickly confute these vain fears of thine, and fully make good his gracious, sweet, and most encouraging word, John vi. 37. "Him that cometh unto me, I "will in no wise cast out." A sweet encouragement to a coming soul! And because sense of guilt and unworthiness usually doubles their fears, Christ hath caused a double negative to be put into that text, on purpose to obviate their fears, and discouragements; ου μη εκβαλω εξω: I will not, no, I will not: or, as we render, "I will in no wise cast him out." Acts of delight flow freely, and easily, and so doth this.

Inf. 3. What an high and honourable relation doth faith bring the soul of a sinner into! The day of conversion is the day of that soul's espousals to Christ.

A king from heaven makes suit for a poor sinner's heart, woo's for union with sinful creatures, rejoices exceedingly, when he wins their consent, and espouses them for ever to himself, when he obtains it; for *contractus* is nothing else, but *consensus explicatus*; a contract is consent explained, in affirmative plain words, *de præsenti*. I do disclaim, and for ever

renounce all others; and willingly yield up my heart and life to Jesus Christ. Now, *ex contractu oritur vinculum*, an obligation results from this contract with Christ, and a most honourable mystical union with him. "He that is joined to "the Lord, is one spirit," 1 Cor. vi. 17. The greatest honour that was ever put upon the human nature, was by its assumption into union with the Son of God, hypostatically; and the greatest honour that can be done to our persons, is by our union with Christ, mystically; hereby we become "Members "of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," Eph. v. 30. the spouse of Christ. O what a preferment is this! What soul feels not itself lifted up far above all earthly honours, in such a relation to Christ as this? The nobles and barons of the kingdoms, think it a preferment to serve the queen; and the angels of heaven do not think themselves degraded, by performing service to the bride, the Lamb's wife. Well might great Constantine prefer the honour of being a member of the church, to that of being head of an empire.

Let all the saints understand their dignity and privileges, by this their honourable union with Christ; and with it let them balance all the reproaches, scorns, and contempts, this vile world loads them with for his sake.

Inference 4. *Be informed hence, of the dreadful and damning nature of the sin of unbelief: a sin that questions, yea, denies Christ's right to rule over the soul; blinds the mind, hardens the heart, stiffens the will, and makes the soul obstinate and inflexible to all the gracious tenders of Christ in the gospel.*

Unbelief is the poisonous breath of Satan, whispering jealousies, surmises, and dangerous prejudices against Christ into the ear of the soul, and all tending to this mischievous design and purpose, *viz.* to hinder or break the treaty of the spiritual marriage betwixt Christ and the soul. Now it will be digging at the very root and foundation of the assenting act, and thus it whispers, how canst thou be sure of the reality of the things reported in the gospel? Is it not possible they may be devised fables, the cunning artifices of men, to keep the world in awe? Thou never savest Christ, for whose sake thou art so earnestly sollicited to renounce all thy real, sweet, and present comforts and enjoyments. Then it dilates rhetorically upon the severe terms of the gospel, advises the soul to think sadly, how hard, grievous, and unreasonable the demands of Christ are, Luke xiv. 26. "If any man come to me, and hate "not his father and mother, wife and children, brethren and "sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

How likeſt thou this, ſoul? Here are all thy principal comforts, thy moſt dear and deſirable things in the world, both perſonal and relative, to be forſaken, yea, hated for Chriſt's ſake: the terms are ſet ſo high, that a man muſt loſe his brains and bowels too, ſaith unbelief, before he can be wrought up to them. Canſt thou endure to ſee all the labours of thy life to become a prey to thine enemies? That which hath coſt thee ſo much ſtudy and toil, ſcattered and deſtroyed in a day, when it is yet in the power of thine hand to ſave all; thy habitation to caſt thee out, thy pleaſant fields poſſeſſed by ſtrangers: *Impius has ſegetes*; haſt thou hardineſs enough to encounter beggary? to fight with hunger, thirſt, and nakedneſs? to lie in a naſty goal, to endure a parting pull with neareſt relatives, which are as thine own ſoul? But yet there are harder trials than theſe. Canſt thou endure a tormenting death, by cruel barbarous enemies? Canſt thou ſtand quietly at a ſtake, and endure the exquiſite torments of the fire, and that in the fulneſs of thy time, whilſt thou art in the flower of thine age, fulneſs of thy ſenſes, and haſt ſo fair a proſpect of many pleaſant years before thee; and all this for an unſeen glory in another world? Theſe are the feeling arguments urged by infidelity, againſt embracing Chriſt's overtures in the goſpel, or coming under the ſceptre of this new Lord: and with how many do they prevail; thus Satan fixes his ſubjects, and makes them ſecure to himſelf.

But ſinner, if God have any intention of ſaving mercy to thy ſoul, thou ſhalt feel the more potent principles of divine faith and love over-powering and ſubacting theſe carnal reaſonings within thy ſoul. It is admirable to behold the Almighty influences of grace upon nature; how the drawings of the Spirit, his omnipotent pull at the heart, makes the ſtrongeſt ties this world hath upon it, to give way, and eaſily to looſe. Mark x. 28. "Lord, we have left all, and followed thee." If not, but thou be fixedly reſolved not to change Satan's government for Chriſt's; if thou ſay in thy heart, and ſtand to that ſaying, I will never conſent to ſuch hard conditions; then hear thy ſentence, read thy mittimus, Luke xix. 27. "But thoſe "mine enemies, that would not that I ſhould reign over them; "bring hither, and ſlay them before me." The ſentence is dreadful, the execution ſure; thy unbelief will as ſurely damn thee, as a milſtone about thy neck, in the midſt of the ſea, will drown thee, Mark. xiv. 16. "He that believeth not, ſhall be "damned." Thou haſt caſt the vileſt diſhonour upon Chriſt,

thou haſt rejected the only way of ſalvation; and what can the iſſue of thy final unbelief be, but ruin and deſtruction?

Uſe II. My next work will be perſuaſive work, to gain the conſent of the ſoule to come under the ſceptre and government of Chriſt; to make his heart glad, and yourſelves happy for ever, by your eſpouſals to him: And O that I could this day ſo repreſent this king in his glory, ſo diſcover the miſerable thraldom you are in under Satan, and your luſts; ſo clear up the reaſonableneſs and eaſineſs of Chriſt's terms and demands, that there might be as chearful and hearty (though not ſo loud and audible) an applauſe, and acclamations returned to demand of your conſent to Chriſt, as this day are, or ever were at the coronation of any king.

1. And to this end, firſt conſider the glory and dignity of the perſon of Chriſt; he is the Son of God by nature, the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon, Heb. i. 3. "He is the Prince of the kings of the earth," Rev. i. 5. The moſt glorious monarch that ever ſwayed a ſceptre over men, is but as a worm of the earth, or a deſpicable inſect in the air, compared with Solomon in his glory; the moſt perfect beauty in the creatures, beneath or above, is blackneſs and deformity, in compariſon with Chriſt: the beauty of roſes, lilies, ſun, ſtars, angels, is not worthy to be mentioned in compariſon with Chriſt: "Thou art fairer (ſaith his ſpouſe) than "the ſons of men." None ever ſaw him ſavingly by the eye of faith, but were charmed into his boſom by love. The facial viſion of Chriſt is the feaſt of bleſſed ſouls above.

This king of glory makes ſuit for your hearts this day; he woo's for your conſent; he paſſed by apoſtate angels, not once making them a tender of reconciliation or union, but comes to you in his red garments, glorious in his apparel: he ſhed his invaluable blood to redeem you to God; he loved you, and gave himſelf for you: if there be a drop of love in your hearts, methinks the excellency of Chriſt ſhould extract and engage it. Write that man a beaſt, a ſenſeleſs ſtock, that hath no love for Chriſt.

2. Conſider, What a bleſſed ſtate, abounding with glorious and invaluable privileges, your conſent to be Chriſt's is introductive to: it opens to all privileges, mercies, and bleſſings, deſirable in the eyes of men; it opens into freedom and liberty, from the the vaſſalage of Satan, the ſervitude of ſin, the curſe of the law, the danger of wrath to come. John viii. 36. "If "the Son, therefore, make you free, then are ye free indeed." It opens the door into reſt and peace; peace with God,

peace in your own consciences, Rom. v. 1, 2, 3. The deliciousness of peace you never yet tasted, who are strangers to Christ; nor ever shall, till you consent to be his, Rev. ii. 17. This shall be your support, amidst all the confusions and distractions, hurries and tumults, of this restless and unquiet world. Mic. v. 5. "This man shall be the peace when the Assyrian cometh into our land, and when he shall tread in our "palaces." Christ hath pitched his standard in the gospel; repair unto it, come under his banner, and list yourselves among his faithful subjects, and the glory of the world to come is yours, if you overcome, and be faithful unto death, Rev. iii. 21. The subjects of Christ, in this kingdom of grace, are shortly to be all translated into the kingdom of glory, Rom. viii. 30.

3. Consider the miserable bondage you are now in, over whom Satan rules, and how your condition still grows worse and worse, till it shall not be capable of any further addition of misery, to make it more absolutely and completely miserable.

You are now without God, without a promise, without peace, without the pardon of one sin, Eph. ii. 12. You have no communion with God, nor title to heaven; slaves to your sordid lusts, Tit. iii. 3. you are under the curse, Gal. iii. 10. condemned already, John iii. 18. and whenever you die out of Christ, you shall die in your sins, John viii. 24. He that was your ruler in the world, is to be both your companion and tormentor in the world to come, Matth. xxv. 41.

Is this a condition to be satisfied in? Can you sleep quietly in your chains? O methinks the poor prisoners of Satan should sigh and cry, through the grates of the prison, especially when they are informed of deliverance at the door.

You have no reason to scare at the terms and conditions propounded to you by Christ; they are equal, necessary, and easy, Matth. xi. 29. "Come unto me; my yoke is easy, and "my burden is light. His commands are not grievous," 1 John v. 3. "All his ways are pleasantness, and all his paths are "peace," Prov. iii. 17. "The joy of the Lord shall be your "strength," Nehemiah viii. 10. If there be repenting work, believing work, sin-mortifying work, or suffering work for you; there is also a suitable provision of divine assistance, to enable and carry you through it all. 2 Cor. xii. 9. "My grace is sufficient for thee." If men cast you out, God will receive you, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. If any sharp trial befal you, there is a door of escape prepared for your outlet, 1 Cor. x. 13. If you meet with trouble in the world, you shall not fail of peace in Christ,

John xvi. 33. If you loſe any outward enjoyment for Chriſt's ſake, it ſhall be recompenced an hundred-fold in this world, beſides the reward of heaven hereafter, Matth. xix. 29. If you be caſt in priſon for Chriſt, the Comforter ſhall come from heaven, and reſt upon you there, 1 Pet. iv. 13, 14. If you ſuffer with him, you ſhall reign with him, 2 Tim. ii. 12.

What think ye, brethren, of Chriſt's terms now? What is there here, for men to ſcare and fright at? Can you mend yourſelves elſewhere? O when ſhall the match be made? When will you come to Chriſt, and ſay, 'Lord, I heartily 'conſent to take thee for my King: I am pleaſed with the 'hardeſt condition required in thy word?'

4. *Laſtly*, Be convinced of the unreaſonableneſs of all that you can pretend againſt this great duty. If you ſay, The pains of mortification are hard, you muſt in reaſon yield, that the pains of damnation are harder, and that it is better for you to "enter into life, halt and maimed, than having two eyes or "hands, to be caſt into hell; where the worm dies not, and "where the fire is not quenched," Matth. v. 29. If you ſay, you have no power to come to Chriſt, your conſciences will preſently tell you, that you never yet put forth the uttermoſt power that you have, in ſtriving for your own ſalvation: It will alſo tell you, that you ſuppoſe you have ſuch a power; elſe why have you ſo long delayed repentance and converſion upon this pretence, that you will ſeriouſly perform them hereafter? Beſides, though your endeavours do not oblige God to do that for you, you cannot do of yourſelves; yet it is more probable he will do ſo, when you ſtrive to your utmoſt, than when you careleſly neglect thoſe duties, and give yourſelves up to the contrary courſes. If you ſay, you would ſtrive, if you were aſſured of ſucceſs, and that you ſhould be received and accepted by Chriſt, if you came unto him, and did caſt your poor ſouls upon him; you can anſwer yourſelves, if you will, that you daily ſpend your time, pains, and ſtudies, upon leſſer things, having no aſſurance at all of ſucceſs. The huſbandman toils all day at plough, yet is not aſſured of a good harveſt; his corn may die in the ſeed, or be blaſted in the ear. The mariner ventures his eſtate on the ſea, yet hath no aſſurance of a good return; the ſhip may miſcarry. The miner will dig into the bowels of the earth, and try here and there; yet hath no aſſurance he ſhall find that rich vein of ore, that ſhall recompence his coſt and pains. Now if men will labour ſo hard, and adventure ſo much upon uncertainties, for a little of the world; doth not your own reaſon conclude, you

ought to do more, and adventure further than any of them, to obtain Christ, and eternal salvation? O strive, strive to make your escape out of Satan's kingdom, to Christ: Sit not with folded hands on the seats of sloth, saying, It is to no purpose.

Suppose yourselves now upon your death-bed, all earthly comforts insipid things to you, conscience presaging the wrath to come, time and hope ending together; would you not then wish, O that we had been ruled and governed by Christ's laws and Spirit, and not by Satan, and our own lusts! Had we been the servants of Christ, we had now been going to Christ; had he governed, he would have saved us: but his servants we are to whom we obey: We have served our lusts, and *the wages of sin is death.*

Or suppose you saw the glory of heaven, or the horrors of hell; that you heard the hallelujahs of the palm-bearing multitude, or the shrieks of damned cast-aways; would it be so indifferent a thing to you, whether you obey Christ's call, or no? Believe it, these are no devised fables, but do really exist, whether you mind them, or not. And why should you not suppose, and forethink things so sure, and so nigh? A sweet voice comes from heaven this day, saying, let all that expect to enjoy the glory that is here, see that they submit heartily to Christ's sceptre; for he saves no more than he rules: And the whole number of the glorified in heaven is made up of such as heartily closed with Christ's terms on earth. A dreadful voice comes up from hell, crying (as it were) in your ears; as ever you expect to escape the miseries and torments that are here, do not reject Christ's yoke and government as we did: Our yielding up of ourselves to the sway and government of our lusts, was our ruin.

Use III. To conclude: Let all men try their own estates, and examine to what king they do indeed belong, and whose subjects in truth they are, Christ's or Satan's; for these two kingdoms divide the whole world. God hath furnished us with self-reflecting powers; we are able to retire out of the confused noises of the world, and sit retired in the innermost closet of our own souls, where none but God and our consciences shall be privy to our debates; and there solemnly demand of our conscience, and charge it to make plain and faithful answers to such questions and enquires as these:

Quest. 1. To whom do I yield the most prompt, chearful and constant obedience? To the commands of Christ, or to the sollicitations of Satan and my own lusts? He that hath my obedience, the same is my Lord and King, Rom. vi. 16. "To

"whom ye yield yourſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye "are to whom ye obey." When God and conſcience calls me to pray, and the world calls me off to attend its enſnaring pleaſures, and unneceſſary employments; which of theſe calls do I pay obedience to?

Queſt. 2. Who governs the ſecret and unſeen part of my life? That every man is, in the account of God, which he is in ſecret, Rom. ii. 28, 29. Now who is king in the cloſet? And what rules do my thoughts move by? If Chriſt bring my thoughts into obedience, ſo that I dare not indulge to myſelf a ſinful liberty to enjoy the ſpeculative pleaſure of the ſins I have acted, or would act, had I opportunity for it: And if I am in the fear of God when alone, and make conſcience of my ſecret, as well as public duties; then I am under Chriſt's government, and he is king of my ſoul, 2 Cor. x. 5. Matth. vi. 6. But if I make an external ſhew of obedience to Chriſt, and ſecretly obey my luſts; I am really the ſervant of ſin, and belong to another king. O my conſcience! what ſayeſt thou to theſe things?

Queſt. 3. Whom do I follow, or heartily reſolve to follow, when it comes to a parting-point betwixt Chriſt and the world; when I muſt cleave to the one, and forſake the other? Matth. vi. 24. Do I with full purpoſe of heart cleave to the Lord? Acts xi. 23. Is it my ſincere reſolution to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth? Rev. xiv. 4. Or have I ſecret reſerves to quit Chriſt's ſervice, and give religion the ſlip, when it comes to real diſtreſs and difficulty? Theſe are ſounding queſtions, and will diſcover whoſe government we are under.

The CONCLUSION.

Thus I have endeavoured to ſpiritualize and improve the great and ſolemn actions of this good day; a day for which (I hope) the children yet unborn ſhall praiſe the Lord. How happy will our king and queen be, if they reign over a people that Chriſt reigneth over; and will conſcientiouſly pay them obedience in, and for the Lord! I believe it will be a greater joy to their ſouls, to ſee you ſet the crown upon Chriſt's head, in your ſubjection to his laws, than to ſee the imperial crown of England ſet upon their own heads. Religion breeds the beſt ſubjects.

Let England praiſe the Lord for ſuch a day as this! how many ſad years are run out, ſince it ſaw the crown upon the heads of a Proteſtant king and queen at once! Let faithful magiſtrates rejoice they ſhall never more be put upon the odious and dangerous drudgery of perſecuting good men, under ſuch a government as this.

Let miniſters rejoice, yea, let them rejoice with double joy to others! they ſhall no more be driven into corners, nor put to ſilence, (a ſilence as bitter as death), whilſt the royal ſceptre is ſwayed by ſuch hands, wherein God hath now placed it.

Let all the people rejoice, for theſe their rulers ſhall be to them as the light of the morning, and as the clear ſhining after rain, 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. And let us all ſay, Iſa. xxv. 9. "Lo, "this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will ſave us; "This is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will rejoice "and be glad in his ſalvation.

THE CHARACTER OF A COMPLETE EVANGELICAL PASTOR, DRAWN BY CHRIST.

MAT. xxiv. 45, 46, 47.

Who then is a faithful and wiſe ſervant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his houſhold, to give them meat in due ſeaſon? Bleſſed is that ſervant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing. Verily, I ſay unto you, that he ſhall make him ruler over all his goods.

THIS great and ſolemn aſſembly, (met upon a greater and more ſolemn account,) brings to my mind thoſe words, and with the words, a very ſenſible touch of the ſame affection, with which the church uttered them, Iſa. xlix. 20, 21. "Children, which thou ſhalt have after thou haſt loſt the o- "ther, ſhall ſay again in thine ears, The place is too ſtrait "for me: Give place to me, that I may dwell. Then ſhalt "thou ſay in thine heart, Who hath beggotten me theſe, ſee- "ing I have loſt my children, and am deſolate; a captive, "and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up theſe? "Behold, I was left alone: Theſe, where had they been?"

Words, big with holy admiration and wonderment, at her ſtrange and ſudden increaſe and multiplication, after ſuch a waſting time as theſe ſeventy ſad years had been to her. This was a miraculous and ſurprizing work of God, in their eyes.

We have had our *waſting time*, as well as they; multitudes of *faithful* and *prudent* miniſters have been ſwept into their graves by EJECTIONS, BANISHMENTS, IMPRISONMENTS, and heart-breaking SILENCINGS. Whence then are all theſe which our eyes behold this day! Who hath begotten us, and brought up THESE? THESE, where had they been; and out of what ſecret receſſes are they come?

Many thought the days of our proſperity, and opportunities of our ſervice, had been numbered and finiſhed, and that God had no more *work* (except *ſuffering work*) for us; when lo, above and beyond the deſponding thoughts, and unbelieving fears of our hearts, we are here this day in a numerous aſſembly, with peace and liberty, to conſult the affairs of Chriſt's kingdom.

Yea, to the joy of our ſouls, we ſee the plummets and lines, once more in the hands of our Zerubbabels; Zech. iv. 10. "Who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things? For "they ſhall rejoice, and ſhall ſee the plummet in the hand of "Zerubbabel, with thoſe ſeven; they are the eyes of the Lord, "which run to and fro through the whole earth." Our prudent repairers, co-working with the divine providence, expreſſed emblematically by the *ſeven eyes*, will bring weak and contemptible beginnings, to happy and bleſſed reſults and iſſues. What ſhall one now anſwer the meſſengers of the churches? That God hath founded Sion; and the poor of his people ſhall truſt in it.

We are met this day in all hearty LOYALTY to the government, and PEACEABLENESS to the national church-eſtabliſhment, to review and conſider the caſes of our reſpective congregations; which I doubt we ſhall find too like that deſcription, Prov. xxiv. 31. all over-grown with thorns and nettles, and the ſtone-wall broke down.

Thus ignorance and error have over-ſpread the people, and the wall of diſcipline greatly decayed. Our buſineſs is to cleanſe our churches, and repair their walls; that ſo they may become gardens of delight, and beds of ſpices, for Chriſt to walk and take pleaſure in.

You have ordered this meeting to be opened with a ſermon, and demandated that work to my hand, by your earneſt and unanimous call. I wiſh the work may not ſuffer by your choice.

When I conſidered the quality and occaſion of this aſſembly,

my thoughts quickly centered themſelves in thoſe words of our Lord, which I have read unto you: "Who then is a faithful "and a wiſe ſervant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his "houſhold, to give them meat in due ſeaſon?" *&c.*

Here we find ourſelves in a parable. A parable is the veil of ſome divine truth: whilſt we are embodied and veiled with fleſh, truth muſt embody and veil herſelf too, in order to our freer converſes with it. There is much truth and reaſon in that obſervation of the ancient Cabbaliſts: "* The ſupreme light "never deſcends without a covering." Yea, ſaith Dionyſius, the ſuppoſed Areopagite, "† It is impoſſible that a divine "beam ſhould otherwiſe ſhine to us, except it be covered with "variety of ſacred veils, and umbrages."

Not to ſpend much time about the order and relation of the text; Chriſt had been ſolemnly warning the diſciples, and all the Chriſtian world, of his moſt certain (though ſecret) coming to judgment; and therefore to beware of luxury, idleneſs, and ſecurity, the ſins of the world; and that all be found, at his coming, watchful and diligent in their proper places of duty. This exhortation he infers, from what common prudence would teach any ſervant, eſpecially any ſteward of an houſe to do, to whom his Lord hath committed the care of his family. It is agreed by all, that the words have a ſpecial and immediate reſpect to goſpel-miniſters, the ſtewards of Chriſt's houſe, or church, to whom Chriſt, the Οικοδεσποτης, or Lord of the family, hath truſted the care and diſpenſation of the affairs thereof. And in them we find,

I. An evangelical paſtor deſcribed.

II. The reward of ſuch as anſwer that deſcription, propounded.

1. Chriſt's deſcription of an evangelical paſtor, ver. 45. which he doth by two excellent and eſſential properties, or qualifications, Πιστος, και φρονιμος, *faithful* and *wiſe*; both which make up the character of a complete goſpel-miniſter: for if he be *faithful*, he deceives not others; and if *wiſe*, or *prudent*, he is not apt to be deceived himſelf: his *prudence* ſuffers not deceivers eaſily to impoſe upon him; and his *faithfulneſs* will not ſuffer him knowingly to impoſe upon his people. His *prudence* will enable him to diſcern, and his *faithfulneſs* oblige him to diſtribute wholeſome food to his flock. Theſe two therefore meeting

* *Lumen ſupremum nunquam deſcendit ſine indumento.*

† *Impoſſibile eſt nobis aliter lucere radium divinum, niſi varietate ſacrorum velaminum circumvelatum.* Caeleſt. Hier. cap. 1.

together, make a paſtor *after God's own heart*, according to Jer. iii. 15.

Both theſe are found in an interrogative form of ſpeech in the text, but it is agreed, that τις is put conditionally for εἴ τις, and is rather hypothetical, than interrogatory: but in this form of ſpeech it inſinuates the rarity and difficulty of finding ſuch a ſervant. He is σπάνιος καὶ δυσεύρετος, as Theophylact gloſſeth it. And Chryſoſtom, by way of admiration, *Quam rari, et praeſtantes eſſent tales! i. e.* 'How rare and excellent would 'ſuch ſervants be?' Theſe are their properties.

2. The *reward* of thoſe that anſwer theſe characters, is propounded,

1. In proper,

2. In metaphorical terms.

1. In *proper terms; Bleſſed is that ſervant*, ver. 46. he is certainly bleſſed of God, whatever his uſage be from men. If he be *faithful*, all his *prudence* will not ſecure him from the hatred and perſecution of men, but it is enough that Chriſt calls and counts him bleſſed; and thoſe whom he bleſſeth, are truly and eternally bleſſed.

2. In *metaphorical terms*: ver. 47. "Verily, I ſay unto "you, that he ſhall make him ruler over all his goods." In alluſion to the cuſtom of great kings and generals, who uſe to prefer and advance diſcreet and faithful ſervants to places of eminent truſt, profit, and honour; as Daniel and Joſeph were. The ſenſe thus cleared, runs naturally and eaſily into this,

Doct. *That our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will amply reward the faithful and prudent ſtewards of his houſe, in the day of their account.*

This point will open itſelf to you in theſe three doctrinal branches.

1. That miniſters, in a ſpecial ſenſe, are the ſtewards of Chriſt's houſe.

2. *Faithfulneſs* and *prudence* are the neceſſary qualifications of Chriſt's ſtewards.

3. Wherever theſe are found, Chriſt will abundantly reward them.

1. *Miniſters, in a ſpecial ſenſe, are the ſtewards*, or *chief ſervants of Chriſt's houſe*. So ſpeaks the apoſtle, 1 Cor. iv. 1. "Let a man account of us as the miniſters of Chriſt, and "ſtewards of the myſteries of God." To them he hath committed the diſpenſation of the word and ſacraments, which contain the great myſteries of the kingdom of God.

Every private perſon, who hath received any talent from God,

(and to be sure the meanest among us hath one talent at least,) is a steward; and will be called to an account for the employment, or non-employment of that talent in the audit-day. But ministers are stewards in the strict and special sense: Christ distinguishes them from the others, as porters from the rest of the servants, Mark xiii. 34. Nor may any assume that office, but by order from Christ, the Master of the family. But this is too obvious to stay longer upon it.

2. We will therefore immediately take into consideration, the *properties* or *qualifications* of the *stewards* of Christ: which are,

1. Faithfulness.
2. Prudence.

And consider them,

1. Distinctly.
2. Conjunctly.

1. *Faithfulness* is an essential requisite to a *steward*, 1 Cor. iv. 2. *It is required in* stewards, *that a man be found* faithful. What ground is there for *trust*, where there is no *truth*? Hence is that solemn charge, 2 Tim. ii. 2. to commit that great trust of the ministry to *faithful* men. And Paul blesseth God, 1 Tim. i. 11, 12. who had accounted him *faithful*, and put him into the ministry. This *faithfulness*, as it respects God, ourselves, and the flocks committed to us, includes,

Faithfulness.

1. Pure and spiritual aims and intentions.
2. Sincerity and integrity of heart.
3. Diligence in the discharge of duty.
4. Impartiality in the administration of Christ's house.
5. And unshaken constancy and perseverance to the end.

1. *Ministerial faithfulness* includes *pure and spiritual aims and intentions for God.* A servant is ὀλίως ἐκείνους, it is not his own, but his master's honour, and interest, he must design and aim at. *Fidelity* will not endure self-ends, disguised with a pretence of zeal for Christ. It is said of the master workmen of the temple, 2 Kings xxii. 7. that there was no reckoning made with them of the money collected for that use, *because they dealt faithfully*, i. e. they had given sufficient proof that they appropriated not a farthing to themselves, but truly applied it to the public, sacred end and use, to which it was given. O let us be all such *faithful master-builders* of the house of our God! Let us say, not *our* interest, but Christ's; not *our* glory, but *his*. Pure *ends* in our service, will give us abun-

dant comfort *at the end* of our ſervice. Have a care, brethren, of all artifices and deſigns, to accomodate carnal intereſts, under a ſhew of devotion to God.

Timothy is our pattern in this, of whom Paul ſaith, Phil. ii. 20, 21. "I have no man like-minded, who will naturally "care for your ſtate; for all ſeek their own, not the things that "are Jeſus Chriſt's." Where the word *naturally* is not oppoſed to *ſpiritually*, but to *artificially*. Others had the art to cloak ſelf-ends under Chriſt's honour; but Timothy was ignorant of ſuch unfaithful tricks and artifices.

2. *Miniſterial faithfulneſs* imports *perſonal ſincerity*. So the word ſignifies, where it is ſaid of Abraham, that God found his heart *faithful*; that is, *ſincere* before him. A faithful miniſter is a *ſincere-hearted* miniſter. And herein, brethren, O herein, or in nothing, let us approve ourſelves the miniſters of Chriſt: Let this be our "rejoicing, that in all ſincerity, and godly ſimplicity, we have "had our converſations in this world," 2 Cor. i. 12. And the rather let us be careful in this, becauſe no ſin is more apt to inſinuate itſelf into our hearts, and duties, than hypocriſy. We, of all men, are moſt in danger to be deceived by it: For our employment lying in, and about ſpiritual things, we are, on that account, ſtiled *ſpiritual men*, Hoſ. ix. 7. But it is plain, from that very place, that a man may be *objectively* a *ſpiritual*, and all the while *ſubjectively* a *carnal* man. Believe it, brethren, it is eaſier to declaim, like an *orator*, againſt a thouſand ſins of others, than it is to mortify one ſin, like *Chriſtians*, in ourſelves; to be more induſtrious in our *pulpits*, than in our *cloſets*; to preach twenty ſermons to our people, than one to our own hearts. Nehem. ix. 8.

Believe it, ſirs, all our reading, ſtudying, and preaching, is but trifling hypocriſy, till the things read, ſtudied, and preached, be felt in ſome degree upon our own hearts. We tell our people (the Lord help us to tell the ſame to our own hearts) that there are *ſimilar*, as well as *ſaving works* of the Spirit, by which their (and why not our own) ſouls may be loſt?

3. *Miniſterial faithfulneſs includes miniſterial diligence*. A *ſlothful* cannot be *a faithful ſervant*. Matth. xxv. 21. "His "Lord ſaid unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful ſer-"vant," *&c.* And ver. 26. "His Lord anſwered, and ſaid "unto him, Thou wicked and ſlothful ſervant," *&c.* I may ſay to him that ſnatched at the miniſtry, as Henry IV. did to his ſon, that haſtily ſnatched at the crown, *He little knows what*

heap of cares and toils he snatcheth at. * "The labours of "the ministry will exhaust the very marrow from your bones, "hasten old age and death." They are fitly compared to the toil of men in harvest, to the labours of a woman in travail, and to the agonies of soldiers in the extremity of a battle. We must *watch* when others *sleep*.

And indeed it is not so much the *expence* of our labours, as the loss of them, that kills us. It is not with us, as with other labourers: They find their work as they leave it, so do not we. Sin and Satan unravel almost all we do, the impressions we make on our people's souls in one sermon, vanish before the next. How many truths have we to study! how many wiles of Satan, and mysteries of corruption, to detect! how many cases of conscience to resolve! Yea, we must fight in defence of the truths we preach, as well as study them to paleness, and preach them unto faintness: But well-spent head, heart, lungs, and all; welcome pained breasts, aching backs, and trembling legs; if we can by all but approve ourselves Christ's *faithful servants*, and hear that joyful voice from his mouth, "Well "done, good and faithful servants."

4. Ministerial faithfulness includes our *impartiality in all the administrations of Christ's house*. He that is partial, cannot be faithful. O with what extraordinary solemnity doth Paul set on this exhortation upon Timothy! "I charge thee before "God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that "thou observe these things, without preferring one before "another, doing nothing by partiality," 1 Tim. v. 21.

Brethren, you will shortly appear before an *impartial God*, see that ye be *impartial stewards*: take the same care, manifest the same love, attend with the same diligence, the poorest and weakest souls that are committed to your care, as you do the rich, the great, and honourable.

Remember all souls are rated at one value in your Master's book, and your Redeemer paid as much for the one as for the other. *Civil* differences must be *civilly* acknowledged, but these have no place in our spiritual administrations.

5. Lastly, Ministerial faithfulness includes *constancy* and *stedfastness*: Not a *backsliding*, or *flinching servant*, Rev. ii. 10. "Be thou faithful, (*i. e.* fixed and constant) to the death, "and I will give thee a crown of life." We look for *happiness*,

* *Labores eccl. fiastici succum exhauriunt ab imis medullis, senium, mortemque accelerant.* Luther.

as long as God is in *heaven*; and he expects *constancy*, as long as we are on *earth*.

Many of us have cause to bless the Lord, and greatly to rejoice in his goodness this day, who enabled us to be stedfast and unmoveable in the trials that have passed over us; and when the great earthquake shaked down our liberties, our estates, and made our hearts to shake, yet your resolutions for God and his truth, stood firm and unshaken; Our hearts turned not back, nor did our steps decline, though we were broken in the place of dragons, and covered with the shadow of death. This we wholly owe to him that holds the stars in his right-hand, but our warfare is not yet ended. Our *faithfulness* is not yet *faithfulness to the death*; we hope it will shortly be called so, whilst it thus involves our self-denial, sincerity, diligence, impartiality, and constancy.

These are the principal things included in the first qualification of *ministerial faithfulness*. In the next place let us weigh and value,

2. The second qualification in the text, *viz. ministerial prudence*.

The Lord's servant must not only be πιστος, *faithful*; but φρονιμος, *prudent*, *discreet*, and *wise*. Fidelity and honesty make a good Christian; but the addition of *prudence*. *Prudence*. to fidelity, makes a good *steward*. *Faithfulness* will fix the eye upon the right end; but it is *prudence* must direct to the proper means of attaining it.

If we look into Rev. iv. 6, 7. we shall there find a stately emblem of true gospel-ministers. They are ανθρωπα γεμοντα οφθαλμων, *Men full of eyes*. They have eyes looking before them to God for direction, behind them to the flocks they lead, and within them to their own hearts; lest after they have preached to others, themselves become cast-aways. They have also *six wings*; with two they cover their faces, manifesting their deep reverance of God; with two their feet, manifesting the humble sense of their infirmities; and with two they fly with chearful expedition in the service of God. They have not only the courage of the *lion*, the strength of the *ox*, the loftiness of the *eagle*, but the face of a *man*, *i. e.* prudence and discretion.

The use of *prudence* to a minister of Christ, is unspeakably great: It not only gives clearness and perspicacity to the mind, by freeing it from passions and corporeal impressions, enabling it thereby to apprehend what is best to be done; but enables it in its deliberations, about the means, to make choice of the apt and proper; and directs the application of them in

the fitteſt ſeaſon, without precipitation, by too much haſte; or hazard, by too tedious delay. And judge you, brethren, by this, what an intereſt the affairs of Chriſt's kingdom have in this ſecond qualification.

I know there is a carnal policy, an unworthy puſillanimity, that often ſhrowd themſelves under the name of *prudence*; I have nothing to do with mock-graces here: My buſineſs is to ſhew you, in what particulars true *miniſterial prudence* is highly ſerviceable to the affairs of Chriſt's houſe, or kingdom. And this I will briefly diſcourſe in two reſpects.

The *eye* of *prudence* muſt look,

1. *To* our own proper perſonal work, to ſee that be well done.

2. To others who work,

1. With us as friends, that we may have aſſiſtance from them,

2. Or againſt us as enemies, that our work be not ruined by them.

1. *Prudence* will direct the ſervants of Chriſt, *in their own proper miniſterial work, that it be well done.* And in order thereto, it will guide them in their deliberations to the fix following proper means, and excellent expedients.

1ſt, *Prudential expedient.*

And 1ſt, *prudence* will direct us, *to lay a good foundation of knowledge in our peoples ſouls, by catechizing and inſtructing them in the principles of Chriſtianity, without which we labour in vain.*

Except you have a *knowing* people, you are not like to have a *gracious* people. St. Paul's prudentials lay much in this, 1 Cor. iii. 10. "As a wiſe maſter-builder, I have laid the "foundation." And indeed this is the *maſter piece* of a *maſter-builder.* All your excellent ſermons will be daſhed to pieces, upon the rock of your peoples ignorance. You can never pitch upon a better project, to promote and ſecure the ſucceſs of your labours, than catechizing.

What age of Chriſtianity ever produced more lively and ſtedfaſt Chriſtians, than the firſt ages? And then the care of this duty moſt eminently flouriſhed in the churches. Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Optatus, Baſil, Auſtin, and Ambroſe, were all catechiſts: And it is the opinion, both of Chemnitius and Zanchy, that that exerciſe, which Chriſt honoured with his preſence in his youth, was a *catechetical* exerciſe.

We that live in this age, have as much *obligation* as they, and God hath furniſhed to our hands the *beſt help* for it, that

ever any age ſince Chriſt enjoyed. As *chymiſts* extract the ſpirits of herbs and minerals into ſome rare *elixir*, ſo have our venerable aſſembly (lately ſitting at Weſtminſter, now in glory) compoſed for us the moſt judicious and compendious ſyſtem, that ever bleſſed this age. And to make it yet more uſeful, divers worthy hands have been employed, ſome in one method, ſome in another, to make thoſe compendious anſwers more intelligible to the people. And yet I am of opinion, ſomewhat may be further done to advance that great deſign, in a third method, that ſhall not only make thoſe points more intelligible, than in anſwering by *yea* and *no*: or drawing out the ſubſervient anſwers to ſuch a length, as too much charges the peoples memory, but withal to intermix the moſt uſeful *practical* matter with what is *doctrinal*. If ſuch a courſe might obtain in all our congregations, I think it would greatly diſcover our *prudence*, and turn richly to the account of our peoples profit.

2d *Prudential expedient.*

Miniſterial *prudence* diſcovers itſelf *in the choice of ſuch ſubjects, as the needs of our peoples ſouls do moſt require, and call for.*

A prudent miniſter will ſtudy the *ſouls* of his people, more than the beſt human *books* in his *library*; and not chuſe what is *eaſieſt* for him, but what is *moſt neceſſary* for them. Miniſters that are acquainted with the ſtate of their flocks, as they ought to be, will be ſeldom at a loſs in the choice of the next ſubject: Their peoples wants will chuſe their text, from time to time, for them.

The greateſt part of our congregations are poor, ignorant, and unregenerated people, that know neither their *miſery* nor their *remedy*. This will direct us to the great doctrines of *conviction*, *regeneration*, and *faith*; and make us to ſit with ſollicitous minds in our ſtudies, pondering thus in our hearts: 'Lord, what courſe ſhall we take, and what words ſhall we 'chuſe, that may beſt convey the ſenſe of their ſin and dan-'ger, with the fulneſs and neceſſity of Chriſt, into their 'hearts?'

Others are withering and decaying in their affections, or ſtaggering and floating in their judgments: *Prudence* will enable the man of God to give to every one his proper food, or phyſic, in due ſeaſon. This will make us ſpend more hours in our ſtudies, and ſet to it with all our might and ſkill, that thereby we may both ſave ourſelves, and them that hear us.

3d *Prudential expedient.*

This *miniſterial wiſdom*, will not only direct us thus in the

choice of our subjects, but of *the language too, in which we dress and deliver them to our people.*

It will tell you, a *crucified stile* best suits the preachers of a *crucified* Christ. A grave and proper stile becomes the lips of Christ's ambassadors. *Prudence* will neither allow us to be rude, nor affectedly gaudy, in our expressions. * "Tertullian "checks those preachers, whose sermons dress up Christianity "in philosophical, rather than evangelical terms." *Prudence* will chuse words that are *solid*, rather than *florid*: As a merchant will a ship by a *sound bottom*, and *capacious hold*, rather than a *gilded head* and *stern*. Words are but servants to matter. An *iron key*, fitted to the wards of the lock, is more useful than a *golden* one, that will not open the door to the treasure.

Some of Christ's ministers excel in a neat and pleasing plainness of language. For this Austin was so affected with the stile of Ambrose: † "With his sweet words, which I loved, "came into my mind the duties which I neglected." And Zanchy saith of Viret, ‡ "I admired his eloquence, and the "force it had in moving the affections."

Prudence will cast away a thousand fine words, for one that is apt to penetrate the conscience, and reach the heart. This made Basil look upon the famed *allegories* of his time, with a compassionate smile, saying, ‖ "We take them for pretty wit-"ticisms, but things of little use or value in the ministry." Who, in the last age, was ever honoured with more success in his ministry, than blessed Mr. Burroughs? And whoever excelled him in skill, to bring down the sublime mysteries of the gospel to the meanest capacity?

4. *Prudential expedient.*

Ministerial *prudence* will shew us, of what great use our own *affections* are, for the moving of others; and will therefore advise us, That, as ever we expect the truths we preach should operate upon the hearts of others, we first labour to work them in upon our own hearts. Such a preacher was St. Paul; he preached with tears accompanying his words, Phil. iii. 18. An *hot iron*, though blunt, will pierce sooner than a *cold* one, though sharper.

And why, my brethren, do we think, God hath commis-

* *Qui Platonicum Christianissimum procudunt Christianis.*

† *Veniebant in animum meum simul cum verbis, quæ diligebam, etiam res; quas negligebam.*

‡ *Singularem eloquentiam, et in commovendis effectibus efficacitatem admirabar.*

‖ Ω κεκομ ψευμενον μεν τον λογον αποιδ χομεθ.

sionated us, rather than angels, to be his ambassadors? Was it not, among other reasons, for this? Because we having been under the same condemnation and misery ourselves, and felt both the terrors and consolations of the Spirit, (which angels experimentally know not), might thereby be enabled to treat with sinners more feelingly, and affectionately, in a way more accommodate to them, and therefore more apt to move and win them.

5. Prudential expedient.

Ministerial *prudence* will direct the servants of Christ (who highly value, and earnestly long for the success of their labour) *to be careful, by the strictness and gravity of their deportment, to maintain their esteem in the consciences of their people.*

In your pulpits, you are carrying on a treaty of peace betwixt God and them; and therefore it will not allow you to do any thing out of your pulpits, to make the breach wider, or hinder the happy close between him and them. The fowler that spreads his net to take the birds, will not leave a feather, or make the least noise, to scare the bird he intends to take. Let not them who aim no higher than a bird, be more prudent and cautious, than you that are set to catch immortal souls. Remember that of Solomon, Prov. xi. 30. "He that winneth "souls is wise." *Prudence* will not allow the ministers of Christ to intermix themselves with vain company, and take the same liberty they do in vain jests, and idle stories. Nor will it allow, on the other side, a morose reservedness, and discouraging austerity; but temper gravity with condescending affability.

To you that are juniors and candidates for the ministry, I will assume the boldness to address you with one seasonable word of advice; and it is this: Have a care of that light and airy spirit, which so much obtains every where in this unserious age. It was the charge of God against some ministers of old, that they were *light persons*, Rev. iii. 4. and yet I cannot but think, comparatively speaking, with some of our times, they might pass for grave and serious. The people have eyes to see how we walk, as well as ears to hear what we say. It will be our wisdom and great advantage, to be able to say, as St. Paul did, Phil. iv. 9. "The things which you have both "heard and seen in me, do."

6. Prudential expedient.

Ministerial prudence will send you often to your knees, to seek a blessing from God upon your studies and labours, as

for the uſe and ſervice of the church. One hath quickneſs of parts, but not ſo deep and ſolid a judgment: Another is grave and ſolid, but not ſo ready and preſential. One is wary and reſerved, another open and plain: One is melancholy and timorous, another chearful and couragious. When theſe different gifts and qualities ſhine together in the church, heavens, what a glorious conſtellation do they make! and what ſweet benign influences do they ſhed down upon the Lord's heritage! All theſe miniſterial gifts and graces are improveable for Chriſt,

1. More privately,
2. More publicly, by brotherly union.

1. *More privately.* When God caſts the lot of two, or more, fellow-labourers in the goſpel, upon the ſame city, town, or neighbourhood; what a bleſſed advantage have they beyond ſolitary miniſters, to carry on the work of the Lord chearfully, vigorouſly, and ſucceſsfully! Whilſt love cauſes their hearts to claſp and cloſe, how muſt their work be facilitated, ſweetened, and proſpered in their hands? But if once jars and jealouſies get in amongſt them; if pride, envy, or carnal intereſt diſſolve the bond of brotherly love; if inſtead of *planting* for Chriſt, they once begin to *ſupplant* one another; no words are able to ſhew what a train of miſchief and ſins will now break in amongſt them, to the great diſhonour of Chriſt, and obſtruction of the goſpel.

I do therefore, in the name of Chriſt, as upon my bended knees, earneſtly intreat and beſeech my brethren, by all the regard they have to the honour of Chriſt, the ſouls of their people, their own comfort, or the ſucceſs of their labours; that no envyings, or ſtrifes, no ſupplantings, or detractions, be once admitted, or named among them. Methinks it is ſcarce imaginable, that thoſe who have ſo lately and ſeverely ſmarted, ſhould fall again into the ſame follies, for which God hath chaſtiſed them.

2. And as *prudence* directs us into the way of our profit and comfort, by this more private improvement of our gifts and graces, ſo into a more excellent way, by a *general union* and coalition with all our brethren, farther diſtant in place from us. It calls upon us to bury, and forget henceforth the factious names of diſtinction, growing out of our different apprehenſions about ſmaller diſciplinary points. How many fervent prayers have been poured out! how many excellent *irenicums* have been written by thoſe excellent miniſters, that are now at perfect unity in heaven! Though *they* did not, yet I hope *we*

and *our children* ſhall reap the bleſſed fruits of thoſe pious endeavours. God hath ſpoken with a ſtrong hand to our pious and prudent brethren, in and about the great city of this kingdom: They have moſt wiſely and ſeaſonably projected this great and glorious deſign: They have followed it cloſe with unwearied diligence, admirable patience, Chriſtian humility, and condeſcenſion; and, by the good hand of the Lord with them, have brought it at laſt to a comfortable iſſue.

The happy reſult of their fervent prayers, and frequent brotherly conſults, (all praiſe to the God of love and peace for it!) are now in our hands, in thoſe bleſſed ſheets, called *Heads of agreement:* Wherein God hath ſignally helped them to evidence their wiſdom in the choice of words, and their humility and charity, in mutual and neceſſary conceſſions. They have, by the mouth of an *eminent brother*, (whoſe praiſe is in the goſpel, and whoſe hand hath eminentlyaſſiſted in this ſervice), chearfully offered up their praiſes to Jehovah-Shalom, for making the two ſticks of Judah and Ephraim to become *one ſtick in his own hand.*

And now, brethren, they wait, yea, give me leave to ſay, Chriſt waits as well as they, for our explicit conſent, and chearful ſuffrages. We have heard the joyful ſound of our brethrens praiſes: Shall we not echo to it, and ſay, Hallelujah, and again, Hallelujah? Ephraim ſhall no more envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim: Our ſwords are turned into plow-ſhares, and our ſpears into pruning-hooks: The Lord hath this day rolled away our reproach. Thus prudence will direct us to carry it with love and unity towards our brethren, that labour in the work with us.

2. Let us next ſee, what direction it gives us, *with reſpect to our enemies, who endeavour to obſtruct and hinder the work of the Lord in our hands.* If we be heartily engaged in the ſervice of Chriſt, we muſt expect many adverſaries, and ſtrong oppoſitions; men that will raiſe clouds of reproaches, to darken our reputation among the people; men, that will repreſent us to them as ignorant and unlearned, factious and ſeditious, erroneous and enthuſiaſtical. Prudence, in this caſe, will reſtrain us from rendering reproach for reproach; and propound to us the beſt project in the world, for the vindication of our names, and ſucceſs of our labours; and that is, that we ſo *preach the goſpel*, that the people may feel the power of Chriſt in our *doctrine;* and ſo *live*, that they may ſee the beauty of Chriſt in our converſations; and ſo preaching and living, we

shall bear down all the prejudices of the world before us. Such doctrine, seconded with such a conversation, like the sun in the heavens, will not only break up and scatter all clouds of reproach, but shed down their enlightening and enlivening influences upon the hearts of the people.

I neither do, nor dare suggest and insinuate any thing in this discourse, against any party or body of men; being convinced, that amongst those who differ from us, there are many learned, pious, and peaceable men, who can heartily rejoice to see the work of Christ carried on by those that follow not them. But some there are, almost in every place, who are more concerned for a ceremony, than for the substance of religion; for a tile upon the roof, than a stone in the foundation: Whose envy, if it cannot reach others by imitation, will be restless till it meet them by calumniation. In this case, ministerial prudence will carefully shun all occasions of exasperation; and if that care be not sufficient to avoid them, it will furnish us with that patience and constancy which will be sufficient to bear them.

Thus we see the necessity and excellency of *ministerial faithfulness* and *prudence*, distinctly considered. Let us, next,

3. View them conjunctly in some special parts of our work, whereinto they shed down their joint and commixed influences. And these, among some others, are the duties of,

1. Defending truth against error.
2. Reproving offenders.
3. Dealing with distressed consciences.

1. There is great need of *faithfulness and prudence, in defending the truths of Christ, against the errors of the times.* Our *faithfulness* indeed will oblige us to do it; but prudence must direct us how to do it. The establishment of our people in the truth, is one special end of the institution of the ministry, Eph. iv. 11. but without the assistance of both these graces, that end is never like to be attained. A faithful minister dares not be silent, where the souls of his people are concerned; yet all his endeavours to secure them, will be to little purpose, if *prudence* be wanting in the management of that design. *Prudence* must both time our contentions, and regulate the manner of them. It will never suffer us to appear too soon, nor too late: Not too soon, because errors are sometimes best cured by neglect, and in a little time grow weary of themselves; not too late, lest they get head, and be past retrieve: Hasty contenders, like young faulconers, let fly the hawk with her hood on. Upon the other side, if friendship, or relation to

seducers, stop our mouths too long, we may in a few days be entertained by them, (as Thyestes was by his brother Atreus) with the limbs of our own (spiritual) children. *Prudence* will not suffer our pulpits to ring with invectives against seducers, till the more private and gentle methods have been tried in vain; and then neither *prudence* nor *faithfulness* will admit of longer delay. But yet when they both advise us to engage, *prudence* must regulate the manner of the contention, and commands us to urge *hard arguments* with *mild and soft language*.

Erroristes are usually hot and passionate, proud and daring persons. Most true is that of Nazianzen, ψυχαι θερμαι και μεγαλαι τυραννοι της τυφλης αιρεσεως, hot and haughty spirits are the causes of troubles and distractions in the church: Hot to hot will never do well. These heights and heats are best taken down, and cooled by strong and mild reasonings: "The wrath of man "worketh not the righteousness of God."

2. The joint commixed influences of both these graces, must be found in all our *ministerial reproofs*. Reprove we must, or we cannot be faithful; and prudently too, or we cannot be successful. He that is silent, cannot be innocent; and yet it is a measuring cast, whether cowardly silence be more prejudicial to the reprover, than indiscreet zeal may be to the reproved. Faithfulness is loath to lose the soul of another for want of reproof: Prudence is jealous of losing it by the ill management of the reproof. Faithfulness saith, it is better to lose the smiles, than the souls of men: Prudence saith, to save both is best. Reprehension is χειρουργια παθων, the chirurgery of the passions; and cutting-work is no easy or pleasant work. Sick and pained men are wayward, and pettish; but prudence will cast fetters upon their passions, and make them lie quiet, whilst faithfulness probes and searches their wounds to the bottom. Prudence can sometimes convey a reproof so effectually and inoffensively, that the conscience of the reproved shall sensibly feel it; and yet his passions not be awakened by the least injurious touch. Faithfulness considers, and urges the necessity of the duty; prudence considers the quality of the person, time, and manner of application. It will reach the sin, and yet (if possible) avoid the offence of the sinner. It sometimes directs us to convict an offender, by transferring the offence by way of supposition to ourselves; sometimes by relating a suitable history, or folding down a remarkable scripture threatening or example, as it were accidentally, to meet them. How prudently did Nathan prepare David, before he came

touch the quick, with, *Thou art the man?* Above all, prudence adviſeth us to keep ourſelves pure from thoſe ſins we reprove in others; and when we muſt apply the precious oil of reproof to them, that we work it in with the warm, ſoft, gentle hand of love and compaſſion; and then the reproof is like to do good, and the reprover receive thanks for his kindneſs. "Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs: Let him "reprove me, it ſhall be an excellent oil, which ſhall not "break mine head," Pſal. cxli. 5.

3. Once more; their joint influences muſt alſo *meet in all our dealings with diſtreſſed conſciences.*

Conſcience is a very tender thing, and when ſick and diſtreſſed, needs to be handled both judiciouſly and tenderly. The wound muſt be ſearched, ſaith faithfulneſs; it muſt be ſearched ſkilfully, ſaith prudence: He that can ſo ſearch and cure it, deſerves that excellent encomium, *One among a thouſand*, Job xxxiii. 23. What expert and dextrous perſons at this work, were our Greenham, Crook, Dod, Ball, and Burroughs! Every empiric can ſkin over a wound, but a faithful miniſter will ſearch it thoroughly, and a prudent miniſter will heal it warily;

Ne vulnus in antiquum redeat, male firma cicatrix;

Leſt it feſter at the bottom, and break out again with greater danger. It requires a great meaſure of both theſe graces, to bring general confuſed troubles to ſettle upon the right bottom; to direct a ſin-ſick ſoul to Chriſt, in the true goſpel-method; to furniſh the tempted Chriſtian with proper weapons againſt Satan's aſſaults, and teach him how to manage them; to diſſolve the doubts, and remove the ſcruples which ariſe almoſt in every ſtep of his way to Chriſt; and ſo to ſettle the fluctuating ſoul in a ſweet and ſure dependance upon him by faith. Theſe things, I ſay, require much faithful prudence, and prudent faithfulneſs.

And thus we ſee the manifold uſefulneſs of both theſe graces in the ſervants and ſtewards of Chriſt. Of ſuch I may ſay, as Chriſt in the text, *Who then is a faithful and wiſe ſervant? Hic nuncii (inquit Piſcator) rari ſunt, ita ut ex mille hominibus vix unus reperiatur, qui munere illo recte fungi poſſit, i. e.* Theſe ſervants (ſaith Piſcator) are ſo rare, that out of a thouſand ſcarce one man may be found that diſcharges that office aright. Chriſt hath not many ſuch ſervants, yet, bleſſed be God, ſome ſuch there are. And,

3. *Whoever, or where-ever ſuch faithful and wiſe ſervants are, Chriſt will abundantly reward them in the day of their ac-*

count. Which caſts me upon the third and laſt doctrinal head I promiſed to ſpeak to. The glory prepared for, and promiſed to ſuch ſervants of Chriſt, is elegantly laid out, in ſhining terms, by the prophet Daniel, Dan. xii. 3. "And they that be "wiſe, ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the firmament; and "they that turn many to righteouſneſs, as the ſtars for ever "and ever." A promiſe which points directly to faithful and wiſe miniſters. What a beautiful ſight is the azure canopy of heaven, when it is about to ſhut its beautiful eye-lids in a ſerene evening! and much more, when it is about to open them with a ſmile, or bluſh, in the dawning of the ruddy morning! And how is that beauty again outvied by the glory of the ſtars, where the pleaſant light ſports and twinkles! how doth one ſtar excel another in glory! Yet thus, and more than thus, even above the brightneſs of the ſun itſelf, ſhall the ſervants of Chriſt ſhine; who, by their *faithfulneſs* and *prudence*, have *inſtrumentally turned many unto righteouſneſs!*

The queſtion about degrees of glory in heaven is not neceſſary, but problematical. We reject with abhorrence the popiſh doctrine of diverſity of glories, as founded in the diverſity of merits: Nor is it queſtioned, among the orthodox, whether there be an equality of glory, as to the eſſentials; but only in reſpect to the accidentals, and concomitants: Amongſt which, they place the additional glory and joy of ſuch miniſters, whoſe faithful and prudent labours God hath bleſſed, and crowned with the converſion and edification of many ſouls. And of this the apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 Theſſ. ii. 19, 20. "For what "is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even "ye, in the preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming? "For ye are our glory and joy." Where we find a very remarkable gradation. He calls his Theſſalonian converts, "his "hope, his joy, nay, his crown of rejoicing." *His hope*, that is, the matter of his hope, that they ſhould be ſaved. *His joy*, as they had already given him abundant cauſe of joy, in their converſion to Chriſt by his miniſtry. And the "crown of his "rejoicing in the preſence of Chriſt, at his coming." This is an high ſtrain indeed! The meaning, I ſuppoſe, is, that the fruit and ſucceſs of his miniſtry among them, would add to his crown, and redound to his glory in the day of Chriſt.

O brethren! who would not ſtudy and pray, ſpend and be ſpent, in the ſervice of ſuch a bountiful Maſter! Is it not worth all our labours and ſufferings, to come with all thoſe ſouls we inſtrumentally begat to Chriſt; and all that we edified, reduced, confirmed, and comforted in the way to heaven; and ſay,

Lord, here am I, and the children thou hast given me? To hear one spiritual child say, Lord, this is the minister, by whom I believed: Another, this is he, by whom I was edified, established, and comforted. This is the man that resolved my doubts, quickened my dying affections, reduced my soul, when wandering from the truth! O blessed be thy name, that I ever saw his face, and heard his voice! What think we of this, brethren? But far beyond this; what will it be to hear Christ, the prince of pastors, say in that day, "Well done good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Mat. xxv. 21. O sirs! we serve a good Master, who is not unrighteous to forget our work, and labour of love for his name-sake. He keeps an exact account of all your fervent prayers, of all your instructive and persuasive sermons; and all your sighs, groans, and pantings, with every tear and drop of sweat, are placed like marginal notes against your labours in his book, in order to a full reward.

But I have far out-run my own intention, and (I doubt) your patience too, in the doctrinal part. I consider to whom I speak, and shall be the shorter in the application; which I shall dispatch apace, in three uses.

1. For Information.
2. For Reprehension.
3. For Exhortation.

Use I. And first for our information, briefly, in two or three confectaries.

Confectary 1. By this it appears, *Christ hath established an order and government in his house, which none must violate.* The church is a well-ordered family, or houshold, whereof Christ is the Head, Christians members, ministers stewards, the ordinances food to be dispensed by them in season. Every one is to keep his own place and station. Pastors must faithfully feed and govern the flocks of Christ, Acts xx. 28. People must know, honour, and obey those that are over them in the Lord, 1 Thess. v. 12. Heb. xiii. 17. the one must not impose, nor the other usurp; but each walk according to the rule of Christ, with a right foot, ordinately and comely.

Οι κατευνηνει ο Κυριος.

This order is the church's beauty, Col. ii. 5. and truly we may expect so much of Christ's presence, as we have of his rule and order amongst us, and no more. O that the rules and orders of his house were better known, and observed! then ministers and people would clearly understand, what they are to

expect from each other in the way of duty, and each person keep his proper station. Ministers would not invade the civil callings of the people, nor the people the sacred calling of the ministry; but all things would move ordinately, *secundum, sub et supra*. The pleasure of such a sight, would as much transport gracious souls with joy and pleasure, as the order of Solomon's house did the queen of the *South*.

Consectary 2. *In the light of this truth, we may also read our duty, how we ought to govern ourselves in the ordination of men to the ministerial office.* This office is to be committed unto faithful and able men, 2 Tim. ii. 2. not to novices, 1 Tim. iii. 6. I know the necessities of the churches are great, but no more haste (I beseech you) to supply their wants, than good speed. *Satis celeriter fiet, quicquid commode geritur:* That is soon enough, that is well enough. It is a less hazard, to put an ignorant rustic into an apothecary's shop, to compound and prepare medicines for men's bodies, than to trust a man, destitute both of faithfulness and prudence, with the dispensation of Christ's ordinances to men's souls.

Some men are moved by pitiful low ends. 1 Sam. ii. 36. "Put me into the priest's office, that I may eat a piece of "bread." Some by ambition, conceiting themselves as able and holy as the best, Numb. xvi. 3. What mens secret ends are, we cannot know; but their qualifications for that work we may, and ought to know. We are solemnly charged, to "lay "hands suddenly upon no man," 1 Tim. v. 22. In Solomon's time, the Jews were exceeding careful and wary in admitting proselites, because they were then a flourishing and prosperous state; not so cautelous in time of adversity, as Josephus observes. I would discourage none that appear to have pious inclinations, matched with competent qualifications. Many be useful, that cannot be excellent. Weaker gifts, rooted in a gracious heart, will grow by using; but nothing grows without a root. I think the plainest men have done the greatest service in the church of Christ: as tender-eyed Leah brought forth more children than beautiful Rachel. But still fidelity and prudence are indispensible qualifications.

Consectary 3. If there be such rewards, in the hand of Christ, for all his faithful and wise servants; *Then we have no just cause or reason to repent of our choice of this office, whatever sufferings and reproaches it hath, or yet may expose us to.* I believe none of us ever yet felt such straits, endured such miseries, or sustained such labours, as the apostle mentions to have befallen

him, 2 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. and yet he heartily thanks the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, (for all that) who had counted him faithful, and put him into the miniſtry.

Brethren, we have ſerved a good Maſter, and have cauſe to admire his care over us, and bounty to us; and whatever we have ſuffered, we may ſay to them that ſhall ſucceed us, as Toſſanus did to his children and kindred, in his laſt will and teſtament: * "I charge you, my dear children and relations, "That ye never be aſhamed of the evangelical truth, either "for the ſake of offences ariſing from within the church, or of "perſecutions from without it. Truth may labour, but can-"not be ſuppreſſed: And I have often found by experience, "the Lord to be wonderfully preſent with them, that walk "before him diligently and uprightly." O he hath been a good God to us! he hath covered us in days of danger, made proviſion for us and ours, and yet his beſt rewards are behind. Let none ſcare at the reproaches and perſecutions that attend the goſpel.

Uſe II. This point caſts an ireful countenance upon all unfaithful and imprudent miniſters, who give their people the chaff for the wheat, and ſtones for bread; who glory in the title, and live upon the profits, but neither feed the flock, nor mind the account. They preach, they pray, becauſe they muſt do ſo; but none are the better for their prayers, or preaching. They ſeem to labour an hour or two in a week, but their labours turn to no account; nor can be expected to turn to any good account, whilſt they are neither animated by faithfulneſs, nor guided by prudence.

Agicola, writing *de animantibus ſubterraneis*, tells us of a certain kind of ſpirits that converſe with minerals, and much infeſt thoſe that work in them. They ſeem to buſy themſelves according to the cuſtom of workmen; they will dig and cleanſe, melt and ſever the metals, yet when they are gone, the workmen do not find that there is any thing done. I came not hither (I confeſs) to deal with this ſort of men; and therefore ſhall leave them to conſider the words immediately following

* *Obteſtor vos, liberos et generos chariſſimos, ne illius veritatis evangelicæ unquam vos pudeat, vel propter ſcandala domi, vel propter perſecutiones, quæ foris excitantur. Poteſt enim laborare, ſed non vinci veritas. Et non ſemel expertus ſum Dominum Deum mirabilliter addeſſe iis qui choram ipſo ambulant, et in ſua vocatione ſedulo et integre verſantur*, &c. Melch. Adam in vita Toſſani, *p.* 720.

my text, which, like a thunder-clap from the mouth of Chriſt, diſcharges woes and threatnings upon them; ver. 48. to the end: "If that evil ſervant ſhall ſay in his heart, My Lord de-"layeth his coming; and ſhall begin to ſmite his fellow-ſer-"vants, and to eat and drink with the drunken: The Lord of "that ſervant ſhall come in a day that he looketh not for him, "and in an hour that he is not aware of; and ſhall cut him a-"ſunder, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites. There "ſhall be weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth." Who can aggravate their miſery more, than theſe words of Chriſt have done?

But I am principally concerned at this time about our own defects, both in faithfulneſs, and in prudence; though neither of theſe (I hope) be totally wanting in us, yet our defects and ſhort-comings may, and muſt greatly humble us. Our vain expence of much precious time, our ſhuffling haſte in ſo weighty a ſtudy as the ſalvation of our people is; our ſinful ſilence, when conſcience ſaith, *reprove*; our coldneſs and dead-heartedneſs; our unſerious and unprofitable converſes; our pride and oſtentation of gifts; our neglect of perſonal conferences: All theſe evidently diſcover, that both our brains and bowels need more ſtrength and tenderneſs. I will not inſiſt here upon theſe particulars, (let us do that in our ſtudies) but haſten to the exhortation, and therein to the cloſe of this diſcourſe.

U S E III.

Are faithfulneſs and prudence the eſſential requiſites of the ſervants and ſtewards of Chriſt's houſe? And will he ſo amply reward them in whomſoever he finds them? *Then let it be our care and ſtudy to approve ourſelves to him, ſuch as he here deſcribes and encourages.*

But who am I, to manage ſuch a work as this, among men every way above me! However, you have called me to this ſervice, and Chriſt hath directed me to this ſubject: And ſhould I now ſilently paſs over this part of my work, how ſhall I approve myſelf, either a faithful, or a wiſe ſervant to him that ſent me?

I deſpair of ever having ſuch another opportunity; I ſee many faces in this aſſembly, whom I ſhall never ſee any more in this world. I ſpeak to the miniſters of Chriſt, the guides and paſtors of ſo many flocks. May I be in the leaſt inſtrumental to quicken them in their duties, their reſpective numerous congregations will reap the benefit of it.

My brethren, this is the day I have often wiſhed for, when

in the ſad and ſilent years that are paſt, I have been ſearching my own heart, and enquiring into the cauſes of God's indignation (as I doubt not you alſo have done); I have bewailed the foremsntioned defects before the Lord, and engaged my ſoul by ſolemn promiſe to him, that if he would once more open the door of liberty, I would (through his grace) labour to reform, and do my utmoſt to perſuade all my brethren to exerciſe more miniſterial faithfulneſs and prudence.

And now I am where my ſoul hath long deſired to be, and the vows of God are upon me; ſuffer therefore (dear brethren), yea, ſuffer from unworthy me, *This word of exhortation: Take heed to your miniſtry, that you fulfil it: Take heed to yourſelves, and to the flocks over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers.* Let us ſo ſtudy and preach, let us ſo pray and converſe among our people, that we may both ſave ourſelves, and them that hear us; let us frugally and induſtriouſly huſband our time and talents for Chriſt; let us prudently contrive, zealouſly and unanimouſly execute our holy contrivances, for the advancement of his kingdom and intereſt in the world: Theſe are plotting times, wicked men are every where plotting to diſturb the civil peace; let us have our plot too, an honeſt plot, how to advance the intereſt of Chriſt in the ſouls of our people; wherein we ſhall alſo promote and ſecure the civil peace of that happy goverment we live under. Let us learn prudence from our paſt follies, and conſtancy from our paſt experiences. I look upon you that are aged miniſters, as ſeaſoned timber, that hath lain out near thirty years in the weather, yet neither warped, rained, nor rotten. I confeſs, in all this time, the ſun hath not much tried the force of his influence upon us, though the ſtorms have. I ſuſpect our greateſt danger will be in the ſunſhine of liberty. If we hold it now, and manage this trial by liberty, with eminent faithfulneſs and prudence, humility and peaceableneſs, zeal and diligence; Chriſt may account us fit materials to build his houſe. Let us now redeem our many ſilent Sabbaths, by double and triple improvements of thoſe we enjoy: Let none of us dare to bring our old ſins into our new pulpits. Then will the Prince of paſtors delight in us here, and crown our prudent faithfulneſs with a full reward hereafter. In order whereunto, give me leave to hint (for I can do no more than hint) theſe three things by way of motive, which are worth thinking on:

We have a ſolemn charge given us by Chriſt.

We have a ſolemn account to paſs ſhortly with Chriſt.

We have now a great opportunity to improve for Chriſt.

2. *We have a ſolemn charge given us by Chriſt*, 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom; preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-ſuffering and doctrine." It muſt be a powerful opiate indeed, that can ſo benumb and ſtupify the conſcience of a miniſter, as that he ſhall not feel the awful authority of ſuch a charge.

The precious and immortal ſouls of men are committed to us, ſouls, about which God hath concerned his thoughts from eternity; for the purchaſe of which Chriſt hath ſhed his own blood; for the winning and eſpouſing of which to himſelf, he hath put you into this office; at whoſe hands he will alſo require an account of them in the great day.

2. *We have a ſolemn account at that day to paſs with Chriſt.* Heb. xiii. 17. "We watch for their ſouls, as thoſe that muſt give account." And what can more powerfully excite to faithful diligence in the diſcharge of duty, than the conſideration of that day! Which the apoſtle had mentioned, in 2 Cor. v. 10. this awful appearance before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; he immediately infers, ver. 11. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perſuade men."

O brethren! let us beware of committing, or of neglecting any thing, that may bring us within the compaſs of the terrors of that day. Let our painfulneſs and faithfulneſs, our conſtancy and ſerioufneſs, compel a teſtimony from our congregations, as the apoſtle did from his, Acts xxviii. 26. "That we are pure from the blood of all men."

3. *We have a great opportunity to improve for Chriſt*; which if we do, we ſhall fulfil his charge, and eſcape the terrors of his judgment in that great day.

We have now (if I miſtake not) the faireſt ſeaſon we ever enjoyed, ſince we firſt preached Chriſt; if this be loſt, I queſtion whether we may ever expect the like. There is great odds betwixt our preſent circumſtances at our return to our flocks, and our paſt circumſtances when we left them, and that both upon our own account, and upon theirs.

1. *Upon our own account*: We were then young, and (comparatively) unexperienced miniſters to what we are now. Tho' we have too many defects and weakneſſes ſtill to lament, yet I am perſuaded we have not ſpent ſo many years among trials, fears, and ſufferings in vain. Theſe things, I am perſuaded, have greatly improved our acquaintance with God, and our

own hearts. It will be as ſad as ſtrange, if they have not. God hath been training us up in faith, humility, patience, and ſelf-denial in this ſchool of affliction. When we could not *preach the doctrine of faith*, we were reduced, by a bleſſed neceſſity, *to live the life of faith*. The rules of patience, humility, and ſatisfaction in the will of God, we were wont to preſcribe from our pulpits to the people, we were neceſſitated to practiſe and apply to ourſelves in our ſad ſolitudes, and various diſtreſſes, through which the Lord hath led us. So that now we come better furniſhed to the work, than ever before. And I hope I have ground for you, brethren, to ſay, as the apoſtle, of his coming to the Romans, that you come among them "in the "fulneſs of the bleſſing of the goſpel of Chriſt."

2. *There is great odds upon the peoples account:* Many of them were full-fed, and wanton, when we left them; they are hungry, and ſharp ſet, at our return to them. An hungry appetite appears in the people in many places, not without great cauſe and reaſon. They are willing to take any pains: your words now drop upon them as the clouds upon the clefted earth. O what an opportunity doth this give to accompliſh the great ends of our miniſtry among them!

Lift up your eyes, and behold the fields, are they not even white unto the harveſt? Let huſbandmen rather loſe their ſeed-time and harveſt, than we loſe ſo precious a ſeaſon, ſo great, ſo rich an opportunity as this.

I have finiſhed what concerneth you, my reverend and dear brethren, and fellow labourers in the Lord's harveſt: A word or two remains to be ſpoken to the people, and I have done.

You have heard what a variety of duty lies upon us, and what difficulty in every part thereof; yet all our labours would be light, and our pains pleaſant, might we ſee more fruits, and ſucceſs of them amongſt you.

Your barrenneſs and unperſuadableneſs, your diviſions and inſtability coſt us more, than all our other pains in our ſtudies and pulpits. How eaſily and ſweetly would the plough go, would you but ſet both your hands of prayer and obedience to aſſiſt us in that work.

You have now as bleſſed an opportunity as your ſouls can deſire, yea, that very ſeaſon of mercy ſome of you have a long time anxiouſly deſired. You have confeſſed to God, that you once ſinned us out of our pulpits; God forbid you ſhould next ſin us into our graves.

If you be wanton children at a full table, our enemies are

not ſo far off, but God can quickly call them in to cure your wantonneſs, by taking away the cloth.

The ſtewards of Chriſt provide choice diſhes for you, even feaſts of fat things full of marrow; and ſerve it into your ſouls upon the knee of prayer in due ſeaſon: have a care of deſpiſing it, if at any time the diſhes be not garniſhed as you expect, with curious figures, and flowers of rhetoric.

The Lord give you hungry appetites, ſound digeſtions, and thriving ſouls; then ſhall ye be our *crown of rejoicing*, and we yours in the day of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: To the word of whoſe grace I commend you all, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among them that are ſanctified.

A DOUBLE SCHEME, OR TABLE:

Containing, in the firſt Column,

The SINS moſt incident to the Members of particular Churches, plainly forbidden in the Word, and for which GOD ſets Marks of his Diſpleaſure on them.

And, in the ſecond,

The DUTIES enjoined on them in the Scripture, in the conſcientious Diſcharge whereof, they receive ſignal Fruits of his Favour.

I. *Sin.* THE firſt, and more general ſin of church members, is, a defect in their care and circumſpection, to prevent all juſt offences to them that are without; forbidden, Col. iv. 5. "Walk in wiſdom towards "them which are without." By a careleſs diſregard of this rule, we harden the wicked in their ſins, bring guilt upon our ſelves, and reproach upon the *name and ways of God.*

I. *Duty.* THeir firſt duty is, to be often together in acts of Chriſtian communion. Mal. iii. 16. "Then "they that feared the Lord, "ſpake often one to another," *&c.* Such meetings for prayer, repetition of ſermons, and Chriſtian conference, greatly conduce to mutual edification; which is the principal intention of Chriſtian fellowſhip, Eph. iv. 16.

II. *Sin.* The ſecond, and more particular ſin of ſome church-members, is idleneſs, and neglect of their civil callings; againſt the expreſs rule, 2 Theſſ. iii. 11, 12. "There "are ſome which walk among "you diſorderly, working not "at all: Such we command "and exhort by our Lord Je-"ſus Chriſt, that with quiet-"neſs they work, and eat "their own bread." This brings poverty on themſelves, and ſcandal on religion.

III. *Sin.* The third ſin is tale-bearing, and revealing the ſecrets of families, and perſons; whence many ſtrifes ariſe, to the cooling and quenching of mutual love; expreſsly forbidden, Lev. xix. 16. "Thou "ſhalt not go up and down as "a tale-bearer among thy peo-"ple." And 1 Tim. v. 13. "Not only idle, but tatlers al-"ſo, and buſy-bodies, ſpeak-"ing things which they ought "not."

IV. *Sin.* The fourth ſin is an eaſy credulity of private whiſpers, and raſh cenſures thereupon. This we ought not to do againſt the meaneſt member. 2 Cor. xii. 20. "Leſt there be debates, en-"vyings, wraths, ſtrifes, back-"bitings, whiſperings," *&c.* Much leſs againſt church-officers; 1 Tim. v. 19. "A-"gainſt an elder receive not an "accuſation, but before two "or three witneſſes." This ſtrikes at the bond of peace,

II. *Duty.* Their ſecond duty is, to follow and back the great deſign of the goſpel in the world, and therein aſſiſt the public miniſtry, by their private and prudent helping on the converſion of the carnal and careleſs world. Phil. iv. 3. "Help thoſe women that la-"boured with me in the goſ-"pel, *&c.* For the Lord Jeſus "Chriſt's ſake, and for the "love of the Spirit, ſtrive "together with me," Rom. xv. 30.

III. *Duty.* Their third duty is humble condeſcenſion to the infirmities of their weaker brethren, and denying themſelves in what they can, without ſin, that they give them no offence. Rom. xv. 1. "We then that "are ſtrong, ought to bear the "infirmities of the weak, and "not to pleaſe ourſelves." And ver. 2. "Let every one "of us pleaſe his neighbour, "for his good, to edification."

IV. *Duty.* Their fourth duty is to be exceeding tender of the church's unity, both in judgment, love, and practice; avoiding (as much as may be, and as far as the goſpel rule allows) all cauſes and occaſions of diviſion and ſeparation. Rom. xvi. 17. "Mark them "which cauſe diviſions and "offences, and avoid them." And Phil. ii. 1, 2. "If there "be any conſolation in Chriſt, "*&c.* be ye like minded."

V. *Sin.* Their fifth sin is in their neglect of God's ordinances upon slight diversions, when they are neither disabled by works of necessity, or mercy, contrary to Heb. x. 25. "Not forsaking the assembling "of ourselves together, as the "manner of some is." Trivial occasions should divert no Christian from attending upon God's ordinances.

VI. *Sin.* The sixth sin is a defect in zeal for God's ordinances, manifested in their dilatory attendance; contrary to Psal. cxxii. 1. "I was glad "when they said unto me, let "us go into the house of the "Lord." And unsuitable to their first practice, Gal. iv. 5. "Where is then the blessed-"ness?" *&c.*

VII. *Sin.* The seventh sin is irreverence, and want of seriousness under ordinances; contrary to Psal. lxxxix. 7 "God "is greatly to be feared in the "assembly of the saints; and "to be had in reverence of all "that are round about him." And this is manifest in vain attires; 1 Cor xi. 10. "The "woman ought to have pow-"er on her head, because of "the angels." And unseemly postures and gestures; Eccl. v. 1. "Keep thy foot when "thou goest to the house of "God; and be more ready to "hear, than to give the sacri-"fice of fools."

V. *Duty.* Their fifth duty is a respectful carriage towards the meanest Christian, and to have higher esteem of others than themselves. External things make no difference with Christ; Rom. xii. 10. "In ho-"nour preferring one another." Gal. iii. 28. "Ye are all one "in Christ Jesus." Yet a decorum is to be kept suitable to civil differences; Eph. v. 21. "Submitting yourselves to one "another in the fear of God."

VI. *Duty.* Their sixth duty is, meekly to receive reproofs from each other for their sins, especially when the matter is just, and the manner of delivering it regular; Psal. cxli. 5. "Let the righteous smite me, "it shall be a kindness: And "let him reprove me, it shall "be an excellent oil," *&c.*

VII. *Duty.* Their seventh duty is, to communicate their spiritual stock of gifts, graces, and experiences, not interfering with public officers, nor by sinful partiality including some, and excluding many others (to whom it is as due, and who may have more need) from the benefit thereof; 1 Pet. iv. 10. "As "every man hath received the "gift, even so minister the "same one to another." 1 Tim. v. 21. "Observe these things, "without preferring one be-"fore another, doing nothing "by partiality."

VIII. *Sin.* The eighth ſin reproveable in them, is, the neglect of giving and taking due reproofs from each other; contrary to Lev. xix. 17. "Thou "ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy "neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin "upon him." And Chriſt's own rule, Matth. xviii. 15. "Go, and tell him his fault "between thee and him a-"lone." And ſo for taking reproofs, ſee Pſal. cxli. 5. "Let the righteous ſmite me," *&c.*

VIII. *Duty.* Their eighth duty is, chearfully to communicate their outward good things for the relief of their brethren; Heb. xiii. 16. "To "do good, and to communi-"cate, forget not." And the better to enable them hereunto, to be diligent in their callings; Eph. iv. 28. "Work-"ing with his hands, that he "may have to give to him "that needeth." And eſpecially to make comfortable proviſion for their miniſters, not by way of courteſy, but duty; 1 Cor. ix. 14. "Even ſo hath "God ordained, That they "which preach the goſpel, "ſhould live of the goſpel."

IX. *Sin.* The ninth ſin is, mutual ſtrifes and animoſities, not ſeaſonably and prudently compoſed among themſelves, but ſcandalouſly expoſed to the view of the world; contrary to the apoſtle's rule, 1 Cor. vi. 5, 6. "Is there not a wiſe "man among you, *&c.* But "brother goeth to law with "brother, and that before the "unbelievers? Now there-"fore, there is utterly a fault "among you."

IX. *Duty.* Their ninth duty is, not only to relieve the diſtreſſed members of Chriſt, but to ſeek out, and viſit them; to know their ſpiritual and temporal wants, in order to a full diſcharge of that duty; James i. 27. "Pure religion, "and undefiled before God "and the Father, is this, To "viſit the fatherleſs and wi-"dows in their affliction," *&c.*

X. *Sin.* The tenth ſin is, the privateneſs of their ſpirits, centering too much in their own concerns; expreſsly condemned, Phil. ii. 21. "All ſeek "their own, not the things "that are Jeſus Chriſt's." And contrary to ſcripture example, 2 Cor. xi. 29. "Who "is

X. *Duty.* Their tenth duty is, to put charitable conſtructions upon doubtful words and actions; and if either will admit a double ſenſe, always to take it in the faireſt, according to the law of charity; 1 Cor. xiii. 7. "Charity beareth all "things, believeth all things, "hopeth

" is weak, and I am not weak? " Who is offended, and I burn " not?"

" hopeth all things, endureth " all things." And such a charity will defend and maintain church peace and unity.

Six BENEFITS of walking by these RULES.

I. *Benefit.* STrict and heedful attendance to these rules, will put a lustre upon religion before the world, and make it glorious in the eyes of such as now despise it. Tit. ii. 10. " Adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Which he here speaks, to encourage all to ordinate walking.

II. *Benefit.* This will allure and win the world over to Christ, and wonderfully prosper and further the design of the gospel. Phil. ii. 15, 16. " That ye may be blameless and " harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of " a crooked and perverse nation, *&c.* That I may rejoice in " the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither la- " boured in vain."

III. *Benefit.* This will effectually stop the mouths of all the detracting and blaspheming enemies of religion. 1 Pet ii. 15. " For so is the will of God, that with well-doing, ye may put " to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

IV. *Benefit.* This will eminently glorify God, which is the ultimate end of our beings. Matth. v. 16. " Let your light " so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and " glorify your Father which is in heaven."

V. *Benefit.* This will fill the people of God (by way of evidence) with much inward peace. Gal. vi. 16. " And as many " as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mer- " cy upon the Israel of God."

VI. *Benefit.* This will secure the presence of God with, and among us; whence results both the efficacy of ordinances, and the stability and glory of the churches: For Christ walks among the golden candlesticks, and threatens the churches, in case of defection from gospel rules, " to remove the candlestick out of " his place, except they repent," Rev. ii. 1, 5.

FINIS.

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